



GIGO⁴

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Hallelujah. Here I sit. It's now 1:30 PM, 7509.21. I've been typing for the last 8 hours, off and on, and this is the last stencil. I never thought I'd be done---and neither did you, I'm sure.

Well, this only makes GIGO six weeks late.

The post office has pulled a quick one on all us third class users. Third class used to be 10¢ for the first two ounces and 3¢ for every ounce thereafter. Now it's 10¢ for the first two ounces, and 6¢ for every two ounces thereafter.

This fact, coupled with the fact that I'm doing a lot more than I used to, and I've also now got school to eat up my time, forces me to go quarterly. I'll remain nominally 36 pages for the next while, although the new postage thing means I can print up to 48 pages and mail it for the same price as 36. So issues will be somewhere between 36 and 48.

I'm sorry GIGO is so late. The reason it is, is a combination of poor planning (like not having enough paper to print the damn thing at the beginning of the weekend---ever try to find mimeo paper on a Saturday?), laziness and overwork.

But here it is at last.

At present it is pouring outside, if that makes any difference, and I feel rather exhausted. If I can get this last page done, I can go to sleep.

Curiously, I cannot remember half the things I've said this issue---which is a rather disconcerting feeling. I feel sure that I've made a fool of myself on numerous occasions.

Ah, well. If I've made a fool of myself, my friends will be the first to point it out.

Next issue, in keeping with the quarterly schedule, will be printed (I hope) in December. Preferably in the vacation, when I'll have a little time to do something. In the meantime, those who cannot bear to go without my inane maunderings for such a lengthy period of time can contrive to get Urf Durfal of FTA!. q

I went out a little earlier--around 11--to get some Coke. There was nothing drinkable in the fridge. That is to say, there was a little orange juice, but I've been drinking orange juice all afternoon. At that time it wasn't raining yet, and the full moon could be seen, almost directly east. Down at the foot of 88 St, past East End avenue, I could see Gracie Mansion looking a bit like a forlorn duck. The streets were relatively empty---two or three people walking up and down--but traffic was fairly busy.

The Deli was somewhat dimly lit, and, for some reason, there was water on the floor. I side-stepped it somewhat gingerly, and hunted around till I found a large-sized bottle of coke. I took it to the counter, where I passed over my 79¢ bottle of coke, and received in return a paper bag and a receipt. After I was out of the door with the bag, I thought I ought not to have taken the bag. Waste of paper, don't you know. But then, I was already out the door.

Why am I telling you this? Well, it fills space.

Dosvidanya. See you next issue. Only the issue is only beginning for you. Well, Pajalwista. Drasvichye. Not that I know what any of those words mean, but Russian always sounds nice.

RESPONSES TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Why haven't you subscribed? Or why have you subscribed for that matter?

No.; Not sufficient material of interest to me. What's it to you Jack? Cause I can get it for free; I have some spare money at the moment & I owe you something for those two samples. I'd subscribe to the Nazi Party of America's journal if they sent me two samples; I don't need to. I get a freebie, remember? However, if I didn't get a free issue I would subscribe. Why? Who knows? Maybe I'm a glutton for punishment.

What, if anything, do you like about GIG?

Zero; Its humor and reviews; It's absurdity; Flippant remarks - it annoys the Post Office - it has a lot of white paper good for the guest bathroom - it doesn't smell up the place too badly; The Tolkien expose, most of the columns. Do more game reviews, please; As a whole -- the comics column ((this one is from the comics columnist)) the fantasy column, the Editor Fills Space, and the wargaming column;

What don't you like?

My name and address on your mailing list; I don't dislike anything, I merely lack interest in some features; the mimeography; I'm not a comic freak & rather ((undecipherable)), but it's all pretty ((undecipherable)); REPRODUCTION!! The worst I've ever seen; That crazy women's libber, the computer column, people who print APA without telling you what it means.

Do you know what GIG stands for? No? Illiterate swine.

Literate swine?; Yes, you've been explicit; I love you, too; Cras is, crazy are; Since you finally mentioned it in your editorial, I assume this is a trick question designed to see if I read the issue. YOU CANT FOOL THE EMPEROR OF THE FRENCH EMPIRE, ROMAN COW!; Yep! doesn't it mean "billions Gigofahrad? Gigotan?; The fact that you don't run previous issue circulation figures. I am a freak for things like that. Come on Greg be a statistician.

((In response to the next six questions:)) YES! Anything to get you out of my hair!

Do you think a computer column is necessary?

No; If you think so. Are computers necessary? Is the word necessary? Ah Horatio, if I knew the question to this answer, I would truly be a queer young man; No; Well--- John does a decent job on a computer column but he takes for granted that everybody understands the basic elements of computers. True, some of us are ignorant swine, but we can be helped. Just ask John to start off with a series of simple language computer lectures dealing with basic computer terminology, working up to the difference between analog and digital computers, then working up to the ultimate how to rip off computers without getting caught. This type of set-up would be appreciated. ((Good lord, you want him to teach you Fortran?))

Do you think a fantasy column is necessary?

Yes; Are you trying to tell me something ((from my fantasy columnist)) no; Definately! Gerard Houanner is fantastic! If I could write like him, I'd be all set. If you dump the fantasy column, I'll scream---and burn your Ddp board.

Do you think a Star Trek column is necessary?

No; No (Actually, yes---a column of Trekkies marching into the Hudson River) On an irregular basis; It's hard to tell. I haven't seen one in 2 issues.

Do you think a Diplomacy column is necessary?

No; Yes; Yes; Touchy. As I have stated before, I have yet to play my first game. \$10 is kind of stiff. Still, I am determined. However, since you are planning to do a Dipzone on Diplomacy variants, why not relocate the Pipcolumn ((Because in Urf Durfal, it wouldn't be telling anyone anything they didn't already know.)) To create an equal balance, do the zine on variants, then do a 2 or 3 page column on normal Diplomacy.

Do you think a wargaming column is necessary

No; Well, if by "necessary," you mean "does my life depend on it" I would have to answer in the negative. On the other hand, if you mean "Would I like to see it continued," on a Blue Monday would I say no, and on a Vanilla Friday I'd say "cherries please." Yes; Yes; Yes; Yes. Very firm on that. I am just getting started on the wargaming hobby, and the last thing I need is to be left high and dry. I need to know what is going on, what is coming out new, etc. Yes, leave it in.

Do you think a Comics column is necessary?

No; I don't even think comics are necessary; Yes. What have I ever done to you? Are you trying to make me lose my only steady job? Of course I think its necessary. Not only from a personal point of view, but because comicdom is rapidly becoming a cancer---spreading to all areas of the world. Your comment on Canada starting its own comic company proves my point, Since comicdom is important to fandom, it would be lunacy to cut the comic column.

Would you like to see a film column?

Yes. But I seldom see films; Yeah, know where I can find one? On an irregular basis; Sure. If you do a column, make sure that Gerard Houarner is made aware that he can still review films.

Would you like to see an APA column?

No; No, why do you ask? An APA list, perhaps. What's APA? A Computer? American Police Association? As I understand it, only fanzine editors would be interested in APA. Why alienate your other readers?

What other columns would you like to see?

Some about old-time sf authors. A column on sexual deviations (which I would gladly do---it would give me a chance to do some research and maybe even earn credit towards a degree. Don't ask what degree, 'cause I'd only answer "the third."): How about a record column? How about one written on more general hobbies?

Should I junk the column system?

No; NO: You do and I'll quit as your columnist. You are trying to put me (and a couple of other perfectly honest fan writers) out of a job, aren't you?

Would you like to write something for GIGO?

No; How about a column on Zeppelins? How about a "Fans of Tibet" column? Yes--I don't know. Everytime I try to write something decent, Absynthe and Cannabis comes out.

Would you like to have a demonstration game of Diplomacy played in GIGO?

No; No; Yes; Sure. Why not?

Do you consider yourself primarily an sf fan, a wargaming fan, a comics fan, a fantasy fan, a Dip fan, a computer freak, or what?

(("Comics fan", "ST fan", and "computer freak" crossed out. Below ST fan is written;)) ST-yes, but I'm not a Trekkie. An sf/fantasy fan with strong desires to screw around. A fantasy fan, a wargaming fan, I guess I am generally a sci-fi/Star-Trek fan, with heavy emphasis on comics. I am however, budding. Wargaming, Diplomacy, "fantasy" and computers are beginning to look appealing.

Should I cut back on zine reviews?

No; No; No; Who cares? Might as well keep them filler, and you might run some ads into ((undecipherable)); No

Why do you read GIGO? If you don't, why are you sending this to me?

Because you very kindly sent it to me. Because its there. Because I'm illiterate. I'm answering so you'll know better than to pull such a dumb stunt in the future. Vanity. I like to see my stuff in print.

Additional comments:

Is Devra Langsam Tibetan?

How about a \$58 award for everyone who answers this?

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ZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZ
3(Interesting typewriter; the "x" isn't repeating, but the "z" is.)

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SAURONS'S DWIMMERLAIK

a filksong sung to the tune of "Johnson's Motor Car."

By Scott Rosenberg

Oh, down by Nen Hithoel
One mornin' I did stray.
I met a fellow Nazgul
And to me he did say,
"We've orders from the Witch King
Towards Orthanc haste to make,
but how are we to get there
without a Dwimmerlaik?"

"Oh, Rider dear, be of good cheer
I'll tell ye my black plan.
We'll travel through the Marshes
Ne'er to be stopped by man.
Through Dagorlad we'll hasten
and when with mud we're caked
We'll wish we'd died or had a ride
on Sauron's Dwimmerlaik.

When we approach the Morannon
We'll give the lads a shout.
We'll tell them all to hurry,
And what it's all about.
We'll send Lugburz a message:
'Prepare, for Morgoth's sake,
a steed for us to ride on--
like one o' your Dwimmerlaik."

/ And once we've got our flier
/ we'll make haste to Orthanc.
/ And when that Sharkey's done with
/ our masters we will thank.
/ Over the fields of Gondor
/ a little ride we'll take,
/ and we'll give those there a
/ bloody bad scare
/ On Sauron's dwimmerlaik.

NOTE: The word "dwimmerlaik" appears but once in the LORD OF THE RINGS, in the following quote from Eowyn: "Begone, foul dwimmerlaik, lord of carrion! Leave the dead in peace!" She says this to the Witch King or to his mount; it is uncertain which. The "Guide to Middle Earth" interprets it as being said to The Witch King, and thus interprets "dwimmerlaik" to mean him. I disagree; it seems to me most likely that a 'lord of carrion' would be a bird. Thus, the dwimmerlaik referred to in the above filksong is the mount of the Nazgul.

Shit, man, I need a hit. Quick, gimme anything ya got, I'll even take dried insect turd if it'll get me high. C'mon, c'mon, hurry it, will ya. Yeah, sure you can have my sister.

WELL, MR. CONSUMER, YOU'RE IN LUCK TODAY, BECAUSE I JUST HAPPEN TO HAVE A NICKLE BAG OF.....

****ABSINTHE AND CANNABIS****

(KING OF KINGS, HALLELUJAH, HALLELUJAH!)

Gerard Houarner

How many of you will cop to the fact that you haven't read the classics? I don't mean The Story of O or Prarie Fire, but the biggies in fantasy and science fiction. How many of you have read Frankenstein (I have't but I'll get around to it, really, Mr. Professor, I promise I'll have it done next week) or Dracula, or Alice In Wonderland, or the major w works of H.G. Wells and Edgar Allen Poe. Well?

You really should, you know. Not only will you be a crashing bore at the next party you attend, telling everyone how Wells was an idealist or Poe a necrophiliac (thereby in the same stroke revealing your ignorance), but you will have some basic knowledge with which to evaluate current works.

Take Dracula. Please. I contains a wealth of information on the vampire, including his powers and habits, and yet how many of you have passed it up in favor of the latest DRACULA funny book on the stands, or the latest Chris Lee entry into the Halls of Hammer?

If there is one thing Dracula has, it's mood. The four opening chapters, though somewhat wordy, are beautiful in that they slowly reveal the danger and conflict situation through subtle hints and some non-so-subtle action. The food Jonathan Harker eats in the area of Dracula's castle (Stoker takes the trouble to give his readers a full account of what the man eats) is full of strong spices, and everybody knows Vampires hate garlic (which, one assumes, is in among all that pepper and paprika.) The terror of the Roumanian peasants as they travel in the night, the sound of wolves, the warnings Harker recieves about Dracula, all lend to a very fantastic atmpsphere.

There are, however, severe problems wit the book. One of them is the constant melodramatics that is so common in bad 19th Century novels (and bad novels in all periods, for that matter.) Every second page someone is breaking down and weeping or sobbing, or worse yet, groaning at someone else weeping. It gets pretty seedy at times. Another problem is the way the diary and journal keepers always manage to put down conversations word for word, even down to the Cockney accents, or Van Helsing's peculiar speech mannerisms. I wasn't too thrilled with th ending, either. There is a long chase as Van Helsing leads his band of vampire hunters against Dracula, and, melodramatic effects aside, it's not a bad sequence. Unfortunately, old Drac is so easily killed that it hardly seems like it was worth all the trouble. His gypsy aides prove so incompetent that it is a wonder he survived all those centuries with help like that. But the crowning moment of literary blindness comes with the useless death of one of the major characters. The man was never that well defined anyway, so the reader is neither shocked, nor left with a feeling of "I-told-you-so." It's a sour ending, not worthy of the power of Dracula.

And if I can bother you with another problem with the book, let me tell you about the "good" characters. I have rarely seen such a collection of emotional, simple and blind heroes in one book. It is truly amazing. One woman, a friend of the Helsing group, is turned into a vampire and is destroyed by the group. They are thus acquainted with Dracula's power and influence over minds (especially female minds--the women are oh so delicate that it makes me sick,) they know that one of his "bases" is right next door to where a wife of one of the vampire-hunters is staying, and they have good reason to suspect that Dracula knows he is being hunted, yet they take no precautions in guarding this woman. Not only do they fail to notice her change in habits, but they have to wait until a lunatic spills the beans before they discover that something is wrong with the woman. Even she fails to notice that she is falling under Dracula's spell (and believe me, that is something you'd notice.)

But don't let these problems put you off. Dracula has some very good moments, and it is one of those books you really have to read in order to get a decent understanding of a) the vampire and b) how not to write.

Listen, even Baird Searles (paragon of mediocre taste in film fantasy for F&SF) admitted that he had never read Frankenstein, and that's been filmed so many times that people are beginning to believe that what they see on the TV screen is true! Everybody knows (or should) that Mary Shelley's version is the one, original and truest story of them all.

AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT: A MAN STANDING ON HIS HEAD AND BEING CASTRATED BY THE FEMALE MAN

When I first read The Female Man, I was afraid to review it. I didn't know what to make of it. Surely Joanna Russ, the deadly critic and staunch supporter of women's rights wasn't advocating the castration of mankind, was she? I hoped, I prayed that it was all some kind of mistake, or maybe a joke. Unfortunately, the dust has settled, and apparently The Female Man is for real. Or I should say, it exists.

For reality has very little to do with what goes on in Joanna Russ' book or characters, and fantasy must have a base in reality in order to be effective. The dildo is a device for female stimulation (read masturbation), so why two women who are intent upon making love to each other would resort to an artificial device when they have tongues (I believe it is called "frenching", thereby explaining a subtle pun in the name Flying Frenchman which nobody ever got. Oh well) and fingers is a mystery beyond my imagination. But this is just being picky (just as Joanna Russ was being picky when she pinned Philip Dick for portraying a sadistic woman that also collects bondage photo's.) It is the least of Joanna Russ' problems.

The Female Man is to the women's movement and humanity in general what Nixon was to the government of the United States. All Nixon wanted to do was make this country the most powerful in the world, but he got a little over-zealous. (So what's censorship, elimination of political enemies and the destruction of the individual compared to being the most important man on earth? I wonder if Nixon is impotent.) In the same way, Joanna Russ seems to have taken on the task of elevating all women to a level where they don't need men, where they can exist in a female paradise (Whileaway) in perfect bliss and happiness and without any of those filthy, alcohol-smelling, largely endowed and generally porky males hanging around, thank you. To quote a woman's movement party-line, "you're forgetting about the other half of the population."

Joanna Russ' male characters are so openly aggressive, so belligerent, so worldly (in the way a man from the South Bronx can be worldly--fuck 'em and leave em), that they are nothing more than gross caricatures. The men are portrayed as the self-confident and assertive dominants and the women are portrayed as having nothing better to talk about than fashions. My God, if things were that way, then men really should be in charge around here, and the women should be nothing more than slaves. But it simply ain't so. Men have hang-ups, just like women. Most guys I know are rather shy and nervous when they start talking to a woman, and they wouldn't dream of rubbing themselves up against her and making snide insinuations and advances like the men in Russ' book. And we have ego problems when dealing with women, just as women have ego problems dealing with men. Yet JOanna Russ seems to ignore this, and instead indulges herself in a black and white, "I'm good and you're evil" fantasy. She ignores basic human psychology (anima and animus, anyone?); she laughs at plotting, tension, characterisization and interplay; she gives the women's movement a kind of Hitler Youth image, and she manages to alienate any middle-of-the-roads with insulting images of male oinkdom that went out with Doris Day pictures.

Let me try to be, once again, specific. Joanna and all her other "selves" have problems. There is not one passage in the entire book where one of the female characters relates to a man as an equal. The Joanna females are either deferential towards men, or, like Janet from Whilaway, so superior that men must run from her or fall to their knees and kiss her ass. That is an oversimplification of male/female relationships, to say the least.

I suppose Russ hopes that, by being dogmatic, by mouthing the party line of the most radical branch of feminism, and by tagging a little disclaimer, on so that any male who cannot her book would feel properly guilty, she would pull off the literary bombshell of the year. She failed. Her intentions were bad, her execution was terrible and her reasons for writing this turkey are, for me at least, very cloudy. It's a lousy feeling when you see one of your heroes (or heroines) fall apart under pressure.

PS- In the grand tradition of the above authoress, I will now proceed to write a disclaimer. I read The Female Man in March, which is quite some time ago. The only reason I talked about it here is because Greg chose to publish two really shitty reviews on the book. I don't think I did such a great job, but I do believe I pretty much stuck to the book and more or less presented my view of why it failed.

AND SO, RENFIELD, YOU CHOSE TO IGNORE MY WARNING, EH?

Alas, some poor loccer in the last issue of GIGO has not been reading the entire text of my column. Douglas Carey (no relation to New York's excuse for a governor, by any chance?) has complained that I did not provide any prices or titles of famous fantasy classics, yet I clearly remember listing the address of T-K Graphics (PO Box 1951, Baltimore MD, 21203) which publishes a free and very complete fantasy and science fiction list (they even have prices, and would you believe every book on the list is for sale?) He also complained of not being able to tell the difference between one of C.S. Lewis' theology lectures and his fantasies. Well, I have the same problem. I can't tell his fantasies from his lectures, even if they say fantasy on the cover. However, I don't think too many of his non-fiction books are floating around in bookstores to accidentally pick up, and anyway, you can always open the book and read a page so you know what you're getting.

Wow, that was some trip, man. Remind me never to buy anything from you again.

EPISTLES FROM HITHER AND YON

Note on the following letter:

In the days of yore, there was a Diplomacy fanzine edited by four high school kids---Nick Ulanov, Gil Neiger, Duncan Smith, and a mythical being who was the invention of the previous three, Penelope Naughton Dickson. Two of the three were also wargamers, and thus often appeared at the gates of Simulations Publications Inc on Friday nights to playtest.

There they met a number of other, younger persons, and converted them to the mystic creed of the Diplomacy hobby.

Eventually two of the three passed on (id, went to college,) but the other stayed on, and took over the reigns of that magazine. A number of young New Yorkers grew out of the bunch from Simulations, and they formed what was, essentially, a third New York group. ((The other two being the TDA group and the older fans.))

In any case, this group grew and continued to grow. And magazine spawned magazine, until the magazines printed by "The Pouch group," as it was known after the magazine of yore, reached the number of---well, quite a few, anyway.

But, in its latter days, "The Pouch group" became afflicted with the name "The New York Conspiracy." Misnamed, I might add. The term New York Conspiracy was originally invented by Rod Walker as an appellation to the TDA group, headed by John Beshara with whom Rod Walker had been feuding for years.

In any case, due to the unfortunate tendency to say "dud", and shorten names to a minimum, the Lingua Nova Yorka Conspiratoria was invented.

The word "dud" was the first word in this language---and some feel it will be the ultimate word. "Dud" according to its dictionary definition means flat failure. It has come to mean a number of things; "that's too bad," "that didn't work out as I had planned," "Moron," "that's strange!", and so on. It can be used as a verb ("dud out!"), a noun ("That's a dud,") and an adjective ("He's a dud player.") In various forms it has even been used as an adverb ("He played duddishly,") an ejaculation ("DUD!") and a pronoun. ("Dud dudded out.") No one has been able to use it as a preposition, yet, though.

And then came the names. They began when Gil Neiger attempted to list Nick Ulanov's name as "Nick 'The Dud' Ulanov," and instead typed "Tud-dud." Nick became known as Tud-dud.

Soon, others had nicknames; Gil was Glam; John Boardman was Borp; Bob Lipton was Bipt; Scott Rosenberg was Dot; Matthew Diller was Dil; I was, in quick succession, Grog, Costo, Cost and Gust; and the list goes on and on.

The list goes on and on. Diplomacy has, like science fiction fandom, begun to develop a jargon of its own.

Anyway, all this may help explain some of the usages in the following letter. ((Oh, yes; the nickname to the zine Ginnungagap is Ginnunganunganunganunganunganunganunganunga etc.))

((Scott Rosenberg, 182-31 Radnor Rd, Jamaica, NY, 11432))

Dear Short-and-pocket Armenian;

Since you fired me for not writing reams and reams of materiel for your dudzine (a new fannish term?) I now feel compelled to write reams and reams of materiel for your dudzine----showing you up as a dud.

Re Richard Loomis' comments about mimeos growing up into offsets: this only occurs when the user performs unnatural acts on the machine (such as using it to print computer games and the like.) In any event, any offset machine produced by these unholy processes should be shunned as being the worst of the worst of the offset machines.

Re Rod Walker's comments: no, Greg, I knew about the PDA and the N3F Games Bureau--I did not leave them out from ignorance of hobby events previous to my entry. Simply note that all the organizations Walker mentions have one aspect in common: they didn't do anything. The N3F games bureau, as I understand it, was not strictly Diplomacy anyway. In any case, as far as most people were concerned, TDA was the first FUNCTIONAL hobby-wide organization (not limited to GM-publishers.)

Rod probably responded to my article because he is involved in a feud with John Beshara who heads up (and IS) TDA. My treatment of TDA in the column perhaps offended Walker because I ~~tried~~ to make it neutral*. Well, if it will make Rod feel any better (no pun intended) I will state personally here that my opinion of TDA is that its the biggest farce in the hobby, that the hobby would be better off without it, and that if John Beshara ever makes me miss Monty Python again I will personally start a ten-year feud with him.

Ditto machines are inherently more fannish than offset, and therefore more acceptable---but the Mimeo Mythos Society does not particularly support their use. Ditto machines require less work and less TLC to operate than mimeos---hell, it's reached the point where I can't let anyone else use my mimeo because only I know its strange quirks and habits. The relationship between the user and the machine process becomes very close--and no unnatural act jokes here, please!

Greg, no one will ever write the definitive history of the Dip hobby--it's impossible. The closest thing would be to have EMERYONE write his own personal hobbyhistory and then tie them all together with a chronology of known facts. ((The known facts is all that has to go into an history. Personal opinion and interpretation of events is irrelevant. Only a few people are so emotionally involved with the events in the Dip hobby as to let it cloud their judgement to that extreme.))

Each person has his own idea about what's happened---people can't even agree on what's happened within the past few days, let alone months or years!

Someone tell William Bloss to either write letters when he is NOT high, or go see a psychiatrist.

As to Gerard Houarner's comments, he is obviously so ignorant of the situation in New York that he has no right to comment about it. (I suppose GIGO is the only New York zine he gets.) He doesn't realize that I publish a TRIWEEKLY (REALLY triweekly, you know, once every three weeks?) zine have just been pinch-hitting publishing Diplomacy Review (IDA zine--250
~~*Please note that Scott has since essentially thrown his hat in on the Walker side of the feud; issue 19/20 of The Pocket Armenian, Scott's zine, denounced TDA and John Beshara.~~

copies, 24 pages), am working on an Anniversary issue of my zine (36 pages,) and am working on an IDA Handbook (60 pages, elite.) Besides this, I am in eight Postal Diplomacy games, go to cons, play in Dungeons & Dragons campaigns ((and now co-gamesmasters one)) GM 4 Diplomacy games ((now somewhat more)) and also occasionally go to school a little, or go to work when the mood hits me. Who has time to write a dumb Diplomacy column? I'm too busy publishing two Dip zines and a Diplomacy book.

((This is an editorial inserted comment, the kind that everyone hates so much. I believe Gerard was commenting on the lack of fan activity in New York. If is true; aside from a small group centered around playtesting at SPI, wargaming fandom is essentially dead in New York; aside from cons, like Lunacon, put on by some real old-timers, sf fandom is nearly non-existent in New York city. ST fandom has some life, but only because of the New York ST club. Only Diplomacy shows any real signs of viability, and Diplomacy is a very small hobby.))

Another thing, Gerard--all the manifold possibilities with multiple parenthesis have been hashed out over and over in Diplomacy press series.

As to Houarner's comments on the Mimeo Mythos Society, what shall we do, Greg? I suggest immediate induction into the DAMNED ORDER OF THE PROTECTORS OF THE BLACK FLAME OF OFFSETISM, OR REASONABLE FACSIMILE THEREOF, THEREFORE AND THERETOFORE SO WHAT. That would be an appropriate punishment. Good, as you pointed out, does not mean High Quality--it means Not Evilllll. I will be sure to send Gerard a copy of Green Eggs and Ham #1 with green-eggs-and-ham stained all over it, so he can be even more nauseated.

The Exponent is not a good zine, whatever dud says.

The Pocket Armenian ((Scott's zine)) has hardly had a dearth of articles lately! I'm overflowing. We've had a dearth of SPACE for articles--but we have had a lot of poetry...

Ah! More Houarner stuff to dud out! His assessment of Monty Python and the Holy Grail is sad. Anyone who thinks that movie was gory-- or "grim" is pathetically moronic--or has a slight problem. THE GODDAMN BLOOD LOOKS LIKE a 1/5 solution OF HEINZ KETCHUP! The extremectories (ARMS AND LEGS CUT OFF) were done so neatly that--well, you get the idea. Houarner states that "there is such a fantastic mixture of absurdity with reality that one tends to forget the brutality and just laugh. Horseshit. There is no brutatlity.

And the ending was perfect. Gerard obviously has no minute perception of the basics of the British absurdity school of humor--of which MP is the latest graduate--if he thinks that this most appropriate ending "sucks." MP does not merely explode myths (as other humorists of the past have done)--it takes myth-busting for granted and jumps off from there into the quagmire of absurdity and inappropriety (or somesuch.) Gerard does not adequately explain the ending. Arthur, after finally finding the Grail, discovers that it is guarded by Frenchmen who heap abuse (literally--from above, verbally and physically); he returns to the shore and calls from an army (which those who watched carefully enough saw contained not only mediievally-armed soldiers, but also what appeared to be Viet Cong members and sanitation men.) The most heroic music is playing, the battle is being called to defend the honor of the King, when-- Throughout the movie (after a short scene in which Arthur & co stab to death a professor delivering a lecture) the dead professor is being followed in short 15 second snatches--from his wife's discovery of his murder, to the investigation by the police, and so forth.

In the end, the bobbies catch up. And its not just "one of the cops puts his hand on a comaera lens"; The bobbies ride on in their sound trucks and paddy wagons, the professo ~~is~~ wife leads them to Arthur saying "That's him! He's the one!" Arthur is escorted, bewildered and unceremoniously, into a paddy wagon, along with several other knights.

Then, one of the policemen casually reaches his hand out towards the screen, and breaks no "a camer lens"--th elns of the movie camera that's filming the movie! Thus you see this hand reaching out, getting bigger and bigger, then squashing and splintering the picture.

I don't understand Houarner; this seemed to me to be the culmination of everything MP has ever done. Dud.

As the THE FEMALE MAN and other oxymorons, your comments are, or course, perfectly correct. All I disagree with is your statement that it's inevitable that societ~~y~~ not lock $\frac{1}{2}$ of its work pool out of work. Society CAN introduce females to the labor pool without making them equal--look at the antebellum South. (No massa jokes, please.) Not that this is happening, but your statement is false. Huh? I mena that women's equality is not inevitable because of your above statement--its inevitable for other reasons that I won't go into.

You neglected to mention in your wargaming column that Rand's subscription games shat. ((True.))

Metagaming Concepts is one of the lesser of the duddish wargame companies --more major ones are Conflict Games (how could you miss those) ((I purposefully left them out because GDW now owns them)), and there must be some others but I can't remember them right now.

From your explanation, SORCEROR sounds like its as much of a dud as STAR FORCE. Why? You mentioned that Simonsen designed it. That's enough. The man is INCOMPETENT.

I think all your columns are necessary, and you should add a D&D column and a film column, and a music column, and a REAL fantasy column (let Houarner be your film columnist) and, no---yes---an sf column. (I know its unthinkable for an sf zine to have an sf column, but think about it.)

Gee, now that you ask--sure, I'd be interested in becoming your Diplomacy columnist! Why didn't you ask before?

And finally, Greg, GINNUNGAetc is spelled GINNUNGANUNGA and sox forth, not with an I.

((The letter is signed "Arioch, Lord of Chaos".))

(Rick Loomis, PO Box 1467, Scottsdale, AZ, 85252)

Kist f~~rom~~shed the rest of your zine, and have some more comments to make, so will send you a letter insted of just a postcard.

Regards to your wargaming column: What do you mean "these three companies are the most active ones?" 1) We are constantly running games, selling games, and producing new games. 2) We are not undergoing bankruptcy proceedings. 3) You must know about us, you send us your magazine. 4) How can you forget about us? (See #3 above.) 5) We have a very large circulation. We publish the following games; STARLORD, IMPERIALISM, BATTLE OF CHICKAMAUGA, NUCLEAR DESTRUCTION, plus we have approximately 800 current

players in our pbm ((play-by-mail)) system. We have three magazines with a combined circulation of about 700 subscribers. But you did not mention Flying Buffalo Inc as one of the smaller game companies. You also did not mention us as one of the bigger game companies. Surely we must fit in there somewhere.

((All true. I'm sorry I neglected to mention your. STARLORD should be reviewed somewhere this issue. Let me rectify my error;

((Flying Buffalo Inc is a moderate sized company which specializes in moderating computer games by mail. They run Nuclear Destruction, which is a simulation (well, a game about, anyway) of World War III; Battle Plan, which is somewhat more complicated, and is about WWII type warfare; Raumkrieg, which is ship-to-ship space warfare; and several other games, none of which are as popular as the above three. In addition, they print three magazines, two of which I believe I've mentioned in previous issues; The Flying Buffalo's Favorite Magazine, a zine about FBI's computer games; Wargamer's Information, a wargaming newszine; and---damn, can't remember the name of the third. Anyway, it's Lew Pulsipher's (I believe) old science fiction wargaming zine, which he gave to FBE. What is it called? I've never actually gotten an issue, although I've seen copies of it around. Nova? Something like that.

((As well, FBI prints a number of wargames, most of them quite simple, and all quite interesting. You can contact them through the address I gave at the beginning of Rick's letter.))

((Another letter from Rick;))

Another letter. I note the letter from William Bliss asking about the circular stickers sometimes found on his mail. Would you please tell him and your other readers that they have nothing to do with subversives lists or anything that complicated. They are merely for routing of mail. The "3" means that this stack of letters (which your letter is on top of) all go to the same first three numbers on the Zip code. The sticker goes on the top letter of the stack, which is why you only get them sometimes. The "C" means all for the same city. The "S" means all for the same state. Simple.

((Gawd. Must you take the romance out of everything?))

Speaking of subversives lists. ((Which reminds me-- I forgot to put double parenthesis at the beginning of the paragraph. Note that this is now Ye Ed speaking.)) I gamesmaster (or used to gamesmaster) two Diplomacy games in The Pocket Armenian, Scott Rosenberg's zine. Adam Gilinsky, noted Star Trek dealer ((if you've been fleeced buying "Vulcan Crystals" somewhere at an East Coast convention, chances are he's the fleecer)) is in one of them. While on a French Caribbean island, he sent me a telegram with his moves, in standard Diplomacy abbreviations. (For instance, Army Piedmont to Marseilles would be A Pie-Mar.) I got a call from Western Union, who told me that they had a telegram from "some foreign European country in a language I can't even pronounce." I had no idea it was Diplomacy moves, so I told them to mail it to me.

In any case, it turns out that Gilinsky had it transmitted "in code--" that is, since it wasn't written in an understandable language, he had to pay extra to have it transmitted. And there's something or other about the Mailgram service not accepting coded messages. So I never got his move.

Anyway, I now think I'm being watched by the CIA. Or FBI, or whatever. After all, I'm of Armenian extraction, and everyone knows Armenia is a member state of the USSR. And I once visited Russia (true, when I was 7--). And I recieved a message from a European country---in fact, from a Carribean island that was formerly French that had just had a revolution ((A revolution of conservates, but I don't suppose the FBI actually thinks)) in code. I'm obviously a Roosian spym after all. And I keep on getting these strange letters from people, like "Army Trebizond-Khazars," and "Leon and Castile Converts to Eastern Orhhodoxy," and "Burgundy is a supply center, Tyrolia is an ocean, Greece and North Africa split in half, North Sea is Black Holed." Obviously more code.

(Don D'Amassa, 19 Angell Drive, East Providence, RI, 02914)

Some Quick notes.

Gina Peterson obviously doesn't know what she's talking about, and never reviewed THE FEMALE MAN, so I don't know why you bothered to include her bit of incoherent raving. It is precisely people like her that will ultimately defeat the ERA. She demonstrates a thoroughgoing insistence that Men are Bad, and Women are Good. Certainly, men oppress women, just as women oppress men, and the stricture of society oppress both. Little diatribes with no content such as hers undoubtedly make her feel better, and liberated, but all it shows to the rest of us is that she is insecure in her own liberation, and needs to constantly demonstrate her aggressive independence, becaus in fact it cloaks guilt about her non-conformity and fear that she is not capabel of living up to the principals she espouses. Gina is not part of the solution; she is part of the problem.

Robert Zscilan is equally shortsighted. There are sections of THE FEMALE MAN that are obviously tongue and cheek. As stereotyped as the male characters are, they are no more so than are the female characters in any number of other books. Russ pokes a great deal of fun at us all along the way, with a great deal of success. I suspect the book is dated, ultimately, and a failure, ultimately, because it is just as unrealistic as its opposite extreme. But the fact remains that it is an interesting book, and that should not be dismissed so cavalierly and with such utter lack of comprehension. Robert's characterisation of the sexes is so repulsive and ridiculous that I see no need to bother responding to it.

I agree with most of what you yourself said, Greg, except that I don't see the inevitability of equality. On the contrary, I expect a return to the Dark ages type mentality, because I expect a wrenching world crisis in the next two decades, the eclipse of the West (which to me includes the Soviet Union, the eruption of wars of starvation, major ecological damage and possible nuclear war. I'm very optimistic.

((You present one of the many possibilities open to us. Let me present another; a resurgence of colonialism, with the great powers---the Soviet Union, the United States, France, West Germany, Japan, Iran, Indonesia---grabbing the most valuable of the resource-producing areas of the world. The first step may well be an American-NATO invasion of the Persian Gulf. Followed by a "triage;" an isolation of the hopeless areas of the world--South America, China, India, parts of Africa, perhaps all of Europe and Asia. A development of a space-going technology by the industrialized nations as the rest of the world collapses into starving neolithic misery. Development of alternate sources of energy (sun-power, fusion, etc) and the development of alternate sources of raw materiels (Moon for light metals, Mars for heavy metals.) And, once the huge population has starved to death in the isolated areas, perhaps a re-colonization and re-industrialization of the world. A prospect which I find much more appealing;

After all, I will be living through the better part of the next 100 years Or not living, as the case may be.

(Rebecca Baggett, 8008 Old Stage Rd, Raleigh, NC, 27603)

As should be fairly obvious by now, I'm not going to make the next deadline. I apologize for that, but even more for not being polite enough to admit months ago that I probably am not going to make any of them. I've found my abilities as a columnist strictly limited; I've tried to do a few since "The Alien Principle," but haven't been able to get any stirring--or even mildly interesting--ideas. Whether this is because I'm dealing with seven-year-old material that's been analyzed, re-analyzed, and re-re-analyzed, or if it's just a personal quirk, I don't know.

I've had to cancel the third issue of SOL III as well, because of lack of \$\$\$, lack of time, and the realization that I can't keep it up alone. I almost ran myself ragged with the last issue, and from what I've seen of other people's senior years, I'd lose my mind trying to handle school, the zine, and writing me own. ((*)) It isn't just you I've been neglecting. I've been holding material here far too long, and that isn't fair to my contributors, so I'm stopping it cold.

I'm really sorry about the column. It's a good idea, I think, when all your columnists are interested; if I were you though, I'd throw open your requests to anything and everything, so you don't have to rely upon them. I've noticed I'm not the only one with late or non-existent columns. A film column sounds nice; the zine review column is a definite asset to any zine (if only because the editor can get freebies that way) ((or whoever is doing the reviewing)); and book reviews would be fun, if you ever get any (I except the so-called review of THE FEMALE MAN; more later), and if they're not too long. What I really like in a review is a one-paragraph, concise sort of thing, that gives me some of the plot and the reviewer's opinion--the LOCUS quickies are what I mean. Of course, you have to trust your reviewer enough to believe him/her if he/she tells you a book is grade-A shit. Or you can get the book and see.

As for Gina Peterson and Robert Zscilan, what can I say? Actually, I've said quite a bit in a three-page rant I wrote recently, but as most of it is personal comments on Zscilan's doubtful manhood and obvious paranoid hatred of womankind, I may have to censor myself before I send it in. I'd hate to come off sounding as violent as he does, even if I would have the excuse of my gripes being directed towards one man, while his apparently are directed towards Women, period, full stop. His was the sort of article which make me pray I never meet the author, because I don't believe in cold-blooded murder. (Don't you dare print any of this; I hope he's not a good friend of yours.) ((Sorry. See below.))

Editor here. Sorry for printing your paragraph when you specifically asked me not to; it doesn't really matter. Robert Zscilan and Gina Peterson are both figments of John Liberman's imagination. He wanted to do a book from two different persons point of view, and I suggested THE FEMALE MAN. He agreed that it was a good book, and I thought the reviews would make for a nice bit of controversy. By the amount of material they've generated, one can see that I was right.

Anyway, I'm sorry for playing a scabrous trick like this on my readers, but it was fun. I suggest all and sundry will take note of my April issue with extreme care. And take it with a grain of salt perhaps.

Ha. Ha, ha. Ha. No time for school? Good lord, I print a 36 page zine once every three months (or tow months, supposedly), a 18 page zine once every three weeks, a newsletter about once a month, and various other things every now and then--including an irregular 36-page fantasy wargaming fanzine.

As well, I am currently in 6 postal games of normal Diplomacy and 4 variant games, as well as a postal space wargame. This last takes me about 10 hours to do one set of orders, and has rules amounting to some 157 pages. I gamesmaster two Diplomacy games and a by-mail multi-player wargame. I work about 15 hours a week at SPI. I playtest for two gaming companies. Occasionally I write a little fiction.

Hell, I'm supposed to do all that, and go to school too? Good lord.... I think I'll write a letter to my congressman asking him to get Congress to extend the day to 36 hours.

Your ideas about columns are worthwhile---the problem is that, with my limited readership, almost everyone who can contribute is. I will announce here and now that anyone who feels competent to write a Wargaming, Diplomacy or Film column would be welcome. If he really is competent, that is.

I'm thinking of introducing a "Weird" column, that would, essentially be on a different subject each issue. Butterfly hunting, Marijuana growing for Fun and Profit, and the Etiquette of Becoming the New Messiah are excellent topics.

(Dave Kadlecsek, 1447 Sierra Creek Way, San Jose, CA, 95132)

Rod Walker's comment that he hopes the IDA will turn into sort of an American NGC ((National Games Club--a British organization)) is rather disturbing. As I understand it, the NGC on one hand, and the IDA/UK and independents on the other do not get along well at all, mainly because the NGC has so much power and is dominated by a single person. I, for one, would not like to see the IDA or any other organization in the same position here that the NGC is in Britain. It appears that Edi Birsan also wants to take a step in that direction with his NEP proposal. By the way, Rod Walker is wrong in saying that VERITAS VINCIT completely documented the fact that the original purpose of TDA was to destroy PDC; what VV did document was that Beshara and the founders of the DA led people to believe that the DA would be a democratic organization, but instead it was a dictatorship of John Beshara and was used by Beshara in his own feuds. That the DA's purpose was to destroy the PDC was alleged in the followup of reactions. Incidentally, the original proposals in VV were for reform of the DA, and only later was a separate organization proposed.

In the computer column, John mentions that HP may be coming out with a full size computer. Well, they are, and the University of Santa Clara (which I attend) is using it to replace their 360. (Unfortunately, like the 360, it will not be available for gneral use; for that we have just an HP 2100.) I've heard that ours is just a prototye, though (USC is less than 10 miles from HP's factory,) and also that the new computer is supposed to save our sociology department from reliance on some monster system at Stanford (pride, y'know.)

You made a mistake in your review of Sorcerer; according to the latest S&T, it will be \$9, not \$8 when it's published. One the subject of STAR FORCE, I thought the "Future History" was more of a loser than the game was....

(Chester D. Cuthbert, 1104 Mulvey Av, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, R3M 1J5)

Thank you for sending me GIGO #3.

I have filled out your questionnaire, and you will find it enclosed. Many of your interests as reflected in the fanzine differ from mine, but this is not so strange, as I am 62 years old.

Of the fanzines reviewed, I have received only UNIVERSE SF REVIEW. Keith Justice writes very well, and makes his reviews interesting, but I have told him that there are other review fanzines which provide a greater number, and that I think he might be well advised to join his efforts to theirs, rather than issue as a separate fanzine his views at his own great expense. I am just waiting to see if he issues his first commercially distributed issue, and of course I wish him well.

The two reviews of THE FEMALE MAN are accompanied by too many words devoted to personal criticism of the respective reviewers, but otherwise I enjoyed reading much of the materiel you presented.

I congratulate you on your sense of humor. It enlivens any publication to have a lighter side.

A lot of work goes into the production of a fanzine like yours, and I hope that the response will encourage you to continue publishing. It is all good practice; and as you can see from my typing mistakes ((What typing mistakes?)) a little wouldn't do me any harm.

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DIPCON; COLLATINGCON; A NEW YORK WARGAMING CON?

I'm a member of the Dipcon Committee of the IDA---a non-voting member, rather. The committee is presently developing a set of guidelines for the "DipCon," the North American Postal Diplomacy Convention. Until the present, the "Dipcon" has been held at various places in the country---for the past three or four years- in Chicago---wherever someone was willing to hold it. In the recent past, it has been part of a larger wargaming convention.

Gordon Anderson, who has ~~held~~ held the DipCon for the past (what? three) years, has announced that his company, Viking Systems, has Trademarked the name "DipCon."

And the DipCon committee has decided that it is the fact that the DipCon is the national, annual gathering of postal Diplomacy players that makes it what it is---and that Anderson can keep the name DipCon if he likes. The IDA will assign ~~the~~ whatever convention it likes to be the convention at which the IDA General Meeting is held---and it is the General Meeting more than anything else which characterizes the Postal Diplomacy Convention.

In any case, the DipCon comm (which will probably change its name to something like the IDA National Diplomacy Convention Committee) is establishing a system for regional rotation of the N.D.C site vaguely reminiscent of the Worldcon system. The two regions open~~ing~~ for the DipCon site next year are Western (or Pacific) and Atlantic.

Origins II, supposedly, at least, the World Wargaming Convention, has announced to the president of the IDA, Edi Birsan, that it wishes to be

the IDA General Meeting site. Edi Birsan has told me, informally, that he supports the Baltimore site ((which is where Origins will be held)), and that he will make no effort to organize a New York bid.

Edi would be the prime mover in any DipCon solo bid in New York; that is to say, he would be the prime mover for a DipCon in New York that would not be in conjunction with a wargaming convention.

Gordon Anderson has recently phoned both Robert Lipton (publisher of ~~NTE~~ THE MIXUMAXU GAZZETTE) and Adam Gilinsky (Vulcan Crystal dealer and not-so-noted wargaming, Diplomacy, sf and Star Trek fan, who has had some experience in conventions) to ask if they would wish to make a bid for the IDA General Meeting site in New York, using the name DipCon as trademarked by Viking Systems Inc. Anderson cannot himself organize a bid, of course, as he is based in Chicago, and the Central region may not bid for next year's DipCon.

If my information is correct, Robert Lipton refused, and Adam Gilinsky was noncommittal. Adam is not very involved in Dip politics, and thus is unaware that and why Anderson is looked on as a pariah by many members of the hobby-----and a great many people in New York.

This, at the moment, looks to be the only bids for the DipCon.

I am utterly opposed to Anderson's bid in New York. God knows, if we want to hold the DipCon in New York, we don't need Anderson's seal of approval-----and it is my opinion that Anderson's stamp would hurt a New York convention more than it would help it.

And I am opposed to holding the DipCon at Origins. Origins was, in my opinion, a badly run, badly thought-out convention. I have seen con reports to the effect that it was the most fantastic wargaming con to hit the scene since the Dawn of Man. If so, I don't think a hell of a lot of wargaming conventions.

Thus, I would not want the DipCon associated with such a travesty. And, as well, any DipCon held at Origins would be swept with non-postal players. This might not be a bad thing for IDA, as it would get a lot of free publicity, but, it would certainly decrease enjoyment of the convention by postal players. To give an example, I played in the Dip tournament at Origins, and did not enjoy myself---my fellow players were all face-to-face people, most of them inexperienced. I would like to think that I played reasonably well---but I did miserably because the other players were playing miserably, and thus stabbed me at the wrong time (which usually hurt them more than me, but still did me in) or some such.

Anyway, Baltimore's a long way to go. (AHA! Now the real reason comes out! No, not really----I intend to go to Origins whether or not DipCon is held there.)

Anyway, finally getting to the point, I intend to organize a New York bid, or at least be part of one. If Adam Gilinsky organizes an Anderson bid, I shall organize one in direct competition---and if that means that ~~we~~ Baltimore takes it, so be it. And if Adam organizes an independent bid, separate from Anderson, I would be honored to take part, and maybe even contribute a bit of my hard-earned cash.

Oh, damn. I shouldn't have written the above thing. That means I'm going to have to send freebies to Anderson and Gilinsky and Edi and IGB and-----

Please note, that, in the above editorial, the word "DipCon" is occasionally used to describe the North American Diplomacy Convention. I recognize that Viking Systems Inc has filed a trademark on the name DipCon; I am in error when I use that word to describe a phenomenon, rather than a specific convention held by Viking Systems. I believe Viking System's act in trademarking the name "DipCon" is, in the words of Edi Birsan, despicable. However, I believe I understand Viking System's reasons for doing so. I believe, however, that Viking System, no matter what its reasons, acted in a wrong-headed manner, and has helped to destroy an hobby institution with no regard for anything other than Viking System's financial well-being.

Forgive me for the use of the word "DipCon;" in most cases, if the phrase "North American Diplomacy Convention" is inserted instead, the meaning is clear.

I have some reservations when I print this; it may be that I am wrongfully maligning Adam Gilinsky, and misstating his position. I hope that I am not, and I hope that he will correct me if I am.

THE "OVERKILL" GENRE

Charles Jacques

Economic instability seems to bring out the worst in people. They love to watch other people suffering---dying. Perhaps it is just that misery loves company. Who knows? Anyway, as of late, two big trends have developed in the escapism industry. Ever since our country (nay, the world) has plunged into the Recession, Disaster movies and Post-Nuclear War comics have become big, big, big! Since the disaster movies have been talked to death, and I'm not being paid to do a column on movies, I'll get right to the disaster comics.

November 1972 and D.C. brought out the first 'Overkill' comic. (For the culturally-illiterates ((?)); an overkill comic means a comic dealing with Post-Nuclear disaster times, "Overkill" being part of the US Government file, "OPERATION OVERKILL," dealing with the possibility of nuclear war.) A Jack Kirby comic creation called "Kamandi, (The Last Boy on Earth.)" The Comic had a fascinating premise--a boy emerges from an ancient underground bunker after "The Great Disaster," a still unexplained incident during which a nuclear disaster took place. (Disaster, you must notice. Kirby never implies it was a nuclear war.) (Optimist.) ((It's being an optimist to think that the human race was destroyed by something other than a nuclear war?)) The boy emerges into a world similar to that portrayed in the movie "Planet of the Apes." The difference is that, in Kamandi's world, it isn't only apes who talk. It's snakes and lions and pumas and---well, you get the idea. (The only things that don't talk are Men, horses, birds and Humans.) As is the recurring form in all Kirby comics, "Kamandi" is a saga --- one which the reader is best off reading each and every issue. Of course, anyone interested in KAMANDI need not fret over missing the first 35 or so issues that have elapsed so far. Every 6 or 7 issues a new story-line develops, so a reader, if persistent, can pick up on the concept quite quickly.

Of course, the reader will be confused for awhile. It will take you awhile to understand the Marvelous CORTEXIN ((I thought this was in D.C.? Okay, I'm sorry, I'm sorry already, stop throwing those rocks! I'll stop with the parenthetical remarks!)) Dr. Canus, Great Caesar, Canus, Ben Boxer, Renzi, Steve, and the many other varied and interesting people, places and things of Kamandi's world. Hang in there, however; it is well worth the effort to understand the series.

True to the "Planet of the Apes" tradition, the "Animals" are masters and the "humans" are the slaves, slaves which the animal world and economy (fresh out of chaos) need desperately now. As soon as the crisis is over, however, a majority of the Masters are going to be trying awfully hard to exterminate the human race. Kamandi realizes this, and is trying to get the tattered remains of his species together to rally against the animals--to get their planet back. His struggle seems destined to fail, however, since there are very precious few humans left with anything approaching intelligence.

But Kamandi and Kirby persist. No matter how many times Kamandi fails in his valiant efforts to save our worthless race, he springs back for more. Apparently his readers are just as persistent. "Kamandi" #1 had a print run of 187,000 copies (Average run for a new magazine.) It was sold out within a week of selling. An additional 350,000 copies of #1 were printed up before #2 came out. #2 had a print run of 500,000 copies, and they too sold out. Until issue #15, KAMANDI was the best-selling comic in the world. After #15 its sales drooped a little, but KAMANDI is still going strong---one of the top ten best selling comics in the world.

The KAMANDI saga is really unique among comic stories. You see anything from travelling roots to undersea dolphin cities to a Gorilla clan dedicated to preserving the Superman legend, something quite real in that world. Where else can you see anything like this.

(Note to horse lovers: Before you criticize Kirby for saying that horses are more intelligent than a lot of things he gave intelligence, ((sic)) remember he kept horses dumb for the dramatic affect of having animals ride horseback. He is not saying horses are stupid.)

Jack Kirby is partial to three things in his comic creations. Sagas, interlocking series, and a third point that I'll get to in a moment. You all remember the famous Kirby "Gods" trilogy of course (Consisting of "The New Gods," "The Forever People," and "Mister Miracle,") Well, it appears Kirby is trying to develop still another trilogy which so far has only budded into a "duology." This duology consists of "Kamandi" and a newer creation, "O.M.A.C." (One Man Army Corps) which is about a super-powered/orbiting satellite -powered being who is out to prevent a nuclear war from breaking out. In his world, everyone has nuclear weapons---even crooks. Large armies have been outlawed, so compact economy-sized armies are needed. Ergo, O.M.A.C. Apparently OMAC failed, as Kirby keeps insisting that OMAC and KAMANDI are linked---taking place on the same Earth. So if Kamandi's radiation-wracked world exists, OMAC failed.

However, the fact he is a failure notwithstanding, OMAC is every bit as good as KAMANDI. The Kirby artwork is there (God, I swear his drawings deserve to hang in the Metropolitan Museum of Art.) the continuing saga

The fantastic scripting is still there. And so are the secret societies.

The secret societies are the third recurring point of Kirby epics. In every creation secret groups are in existence. In Kamandi, one has numerous sects, groups and fanatics. In OMAC, one has a sponsoring regular group called the Global Peace Agency (GPA) which created OMAC and helped him to accept his new life. Now, OMAC helps them non-violently (more or less) fight for peace. The GPA is, I think, Kirby's ultimate group --- it pushes secrecy to the brink. They cover their bodies with a cosmetic spray so it appears they represent all nationalities. Personally, I think they are a re-vision of the KKK, out to get warmongers and conquest freaks (me!), and instead of using bedsheets, they use spray.

Next we look at "Planet of Vampires." The scenario goes something like this; 5 astronauts are sent on a mission to explore Mars and its moons. They make the five year trip across the gulf of space only to find they have to return to Earth immediately. A nuclear/biological war has broken out, and Earth is in big trouble. Making the five year return trip, they find the Earth in shambles. In the five plus years since the war, all of Earth's survivors have been divided into two classes. One class is supposedly dedicated to the preservation of civilization on Earth. The groups live in pre-constructed domes all over the world. Under these domes, actual cities thrive. These cities are virtual luxury apartments. Nobody in the present world could ask for more. There is one disadvantage to living in the dome, however. Inhabitants of the dome have lived in fresh, conditioned air for five years while the outside world was forced to live with holocaust spawned diseases. Now it is impossible for the "Domies" to go outside for any great length of time without getting a terminal disease.

The second class of citizens are supposedly savages. However, they are badly needed by the "Domies." You see, after 5 years of living in the open, they have developed total immunity to any disease. Those that survived, that is. Now the "Domies" hunt them down like savages, taking them into their domes and sucking them dry of blood, which they then use to make a serum for their people....so they too may become invulnerable to the ravages of a war-swept world.

The only thing that prevents the domies from total slaughter and world-wide siphoning of savages is limited facilities, and the counterattacks of the warrior groups of "Street Gangs," that people have sunk to for survival.

After splashdown, the astronauts are rescued by the "Domies" and well received. Then something hideous happens---the astronauts see the siphoning of a savage. They are appalled, and destroy the plant and free the captive slaves, the men and women break for freedom. Outside the dome, the 4 astronauts (1 died a little after Touchdown) join one of the street gangs, and begin rallying the savages against the Domies.

Now, the chairman of the local dome isn't too crazy about this idea. He orders the Astronauts hunted down. He wants the males dead, their blood to be used as uncontaminated serum. The women he wants alive---for breeding stock. He wants to start of a race of half-breeds who aren't dependent on the anti-body serum. He then sends out a small fleet of hovercraft to hunt the instigating astronauts down. From there, I tell you no more. Buy the next issue and pick up on the story.

From a personal point of view, "POV" is pretty good. It runs a close third behind KAMANDI and OMAC. If these comics were done by anyone but Kirby, it would be an easy first. "POV" is extremely well done....almost as well done as Marvel comics are. But that isn't surprising, since the same guy that started Marvel started Atlas.

"POV" has potential, and is definitely worth taking a look at. As I said, it resembles a Marvel comic almost to a "t." It has the developing subplots and strung out stories. Yes. If "POV" is canned at all, it will be one hell of a surprise.

Enough with vague personal praises. Lets move on to "Mighty Samson". Gold Key had one of the first Overkill comics, if not the first. The comic is "Mighty Samson," and it deals with a herculean mutant with an eyepatch over his right eye, his very feminine girl friend, and her "scientist" father. ((Gawd---sounds like a space opera trio.)) A trio which is roaming around the ruins of N'yark (New York) at least one, perhaps more, generations after the Big One. In their travels, they fight savages, mutants, and some very interesting creatures.

Mighty Samson is quite good, considering that it is a Gold Key comic, which immediately means that it is keyed to a slightly lower intelligence level. This attitude of Gold Key's--that all comic fans are immature is changing slowly, thankfully. But for the moment, it lacks. Anyway, the basic premise is that this wandering trio finds a new "Culture" each issue. You see, prior to the nuclear war, New York grew to enormous proportions. Almost beyond belief. * Now, the Begotten survivors who live in the subway tunnels, factories, buildings, etc adapt to their culture and surroundings. For instance, survivors who lasted the war out in a police station would more than likely become Police Statesmen out to bring law and order to the world in ruins. Get my drift?

(Did I say New York was enormous? It must have grown to the size of Rhode Island. In 30 or 40 odd issues, our adventurous trio never crosses into New Hersey!)**

"Mighty Samson," however has its faults. All these comics do. But I'll get to that later.

The next comic we find is a Charlton Comic. It is entitled "Doomsday Plus One", and deals with the adventures of three astronauts and a thawed-out caveman in the Post-Nuke-War days. Temporarily, however, our heroes aren't too adventurous. They are mainly hanging around a deserted Canadian Air Force base, staving off the attacks of a Communist cyborg who survived the war also. "Doomsday" is fairly new, so I can't say much about it. I do recommend you pick up a copy, as it is very good.

 *New York is, at the moment, approximately 365 square miles.

**I don't know about that. You say New York has grown immensly---well, Boswash is pretty big.

In any case, who would want to cross over into New HJersey???

We come to our final Overkill comic-- Ironjaw. Wait a minute, somebody out there is screaming, IRONJAW is a Sword & Sorcery/Barbaric adventure comic. Half true. While on the surface it is an S&S/BA comic, if you look closely at IRONJAW, you see it indeed is an Overkill Survival Comic. What is the most prominent feature of IRONJAW's world? The Great-Crater-Where-Nothing-Grows. What are the two most powerful bands on this Earth of the future? The Robber bands (Queyy; since POV and IRONJAW are both put out by Atlas, could the Robber Bands be descendants of POV's Street Gangs?) and the MUTANT mountain people. What is the chief religion of this mixed world? Worship of the Great Machine (aka a gimmicked up washing machine that somehow survived the great war.) I can go on and on.. But I'm sure you get the general idea.

Okay, earlier on I mentioned that all these Overkill comics had basic flaws. The biggest offenders are KAMANDI, DOOMSDAY PLUS ONE, MIGHTY SAMSON and PLANET OF THE VAMPIRES. All these comics show something surviving. Kamandi shows thousands of cities still standing, in ruins, but still standing nonetheless. DOOMSDAY shows military bases unharmed. MIGHTY SAMSON shows New York in perfect running condition ((Impossible. New York has never been in perfect running condition.)) PLANET OF THE VAMPIRES shows cities in still living and manageable condition. This is all quite impossible. A nuclear war and/or disaster would completely level the earth, turning all but maybe 1% into level ground. That other 1% would be in ruins, and would contain less than 1 million survivors. Nuclear weapons are controlled by automatic equipment. Once a country starts firing off its arsenal, everything goes off. And it would be a long time before all the worlds arsenals are depleted. *

The same comics I mentioned above are the same offenders in the next gripe I'm laying on you. In all the above mentioned comics, mankind's survivors are portrayed as high-spirited determined people, who are dedicated to preserving mankind and saving civilization, and seeing that it never happens again. This is about 3 bricks short of a full load. When a person has his planet blown off the celestial map, he could care less about the survival of civilization. It's his survival he's interested in. Food, shelter and sex are all he's interested in preserving.

The only comic that really portrays the post-disaster survival in truth is IRONJAW. It shows the Earth several generations after the war. The forests, animals and men are just starting to come back. Civilization be damned; people are barbarians, interested only in survival. The weak just don't make it. And that's the way it will be.

Of course, if you are an optimist, and/or like to read some really good comics, then pick up a copy of all these comics I've mentioned. All are fantastic, even if they are a little far-fetched.

* actually, there's a good ~~xxxx~~ chance that a large percentage of the population would survive a nuclear war. The nuclear strategy of NATO and, I assume, the Warsaw Pact is to destroy enemy nuclear installations--missile bases, air bases and so on. In any first strike, it would be the weapons installations that would be destroyed, rather than large cities or inconspicuous countryside.

Of course, the defensive strategies of both system of allies calls for massive retaliation on cities, farmland etc,. Apparently, it is hoped that the threat of massive retaliation would make it unlikely for a nation to make a first strike to begin with.

enemies' weapons installations so as to make that enemies' retaliation as weak as possible, a nation could actually win a nuclear war. If one calls destroying three quarters of one's conquests and some third of one's home winning.

ent to anyone's victory has existed since the first time a nation was destroyed, but

It is true that the nation's arsenals contain enough nuclear weaponry to level the world several times over----but the fact that there is so much weaponry does not mean that the nuclear blasts would be given nicely even distribution, so as to level everything, or even that the large majority of them would be fired.

In any case, it is possible for there to be survivors after a nuclear war. Of a kind.

WARGAME REVIEWS

STAR RAIDER (Attack Wargaming Association, 314 Edgley Av, Glenside, PA, 19038, \$4 to \$6.50, depending on the packaging.)

STAR RAIDER is a rotten game. To put it succinctly, it shits.

The board is advertised as being reproduced in three brilliant colors---and so it is. From an apparently hand-drawn original. The counters, too, are reproduced from a hand-drawn original. The rules were apparently written by the chimpanzee-and-typewriter system. The number of typos, grammatical errors, etc ad nauseum is exactly that. From the explanations in the rules, one is unable to distinguish between black holes and pulsars. The rules are badly written and badly organized. They explain nothing. They are incomplete. They are, for the most part, unintelligible.

Combat is ridiculously simple. Roll a die, and one loses half of one's force. A large force of slightly inferior ships has no chance against one very large ship---more likely, that one ship will destroy the entire enemy fleet, ship by ship. The scale is ridiculous---about 60 stars in an entire "galaxy." The terrain is ridiculous.

I'd burn the game, except that the plastic envelope it came in would stink up the house. And I am loath to destroy a \$6 investment, no matter how much of a turkey the game is. So, the game will stay hidden under a pile of shit for all eternity. I'll never play the thing again, thank god.

WAR OF THE WIZARD (Tactical Studies Rules, POB 756, Lake Geneva, WI, 53147, \$7.50)

WOTW is a tactical sorcerer vs. sorcerer (with variations for priests) game. The rules are a reasonably well-written 30+ page booklet detailing the basic system, the spells available, and the tables necessary. The board is a "ladder" with 24 steps.

The game is complicated and fascinating. Over 70 spells are detailed, some usable by sorcerers and some by priests, and most by both. Essentially, each player sits at one end of the board, and casts spells at the other, attempting to drive that players' "spell points" below zero. The first player to be successful wins.

Essentially, then, the player with the higher number of spell points wins

I arrive at Penn Station at 12, with a couple of friends, just in time to be told that our train is late, and won't leave for 15 minutes. In 15 minutes, we are told that it is late some more, and won't leave for ANOTHER 15 minutes, Which is exactly what we are told 15 minutes later.

ARRG. Eventually, the forces of Right and Justice triumphs, and Amtrak manages to scrape up a train from somewhere. We board, and my friends disappear. Probably to the bar. I don't see them again until we get off, when we hunt up a taxi.

After a great deal of cruising around the John Hopkin's campus, we find what we think is the registration building. It isn't, but we search around for a bit, peering at the badly desgined, somewhat cockeyed map we got in the mail, and eventually find it. The line is 50' long.

So I put Adam Kasanof in line, with instructions to get my badge as well as his when he gets to the fore of the line. I go off and play pinball for a while, then go down to the basement to discover wather I'm in the D&D session going on in 15 minutes, or one the folllowing day. I don' have to worry; not till tommorrow, at 10 o'clock. In the morning. Jesus, do they really expect me to be up by 10 at a convention? Poor planning

But then "poor planning" is no news; that's evident in everything I've seen so far of the convention. In fact, the bnlly things that were handled competently during the entire convention were the tournaments.

I go back to find Adam and my badge. He's not in line. In fact, he's playing D&D-----and HE HASN'T GOT MY BADGE. I withstrain my blows, and do not inflict 1-6 hits on his idiotically smiling face.

Eventually, I get my badge and the keys to the dorm, and wander off with s some other people, in an attempt to discover where I'll be sleeping. My badge continually falls off my nylon shirt. I make scathing remarks about people who are too chep to buy clip badges, instead of making do with bloody stick-ons.

Eventually, we find our ~~dorm~~ ~~hell~~ ~~hole~~ hell hole, which has no air conditioning, precious few lights, a badly-cleaned bathroom down the corridor, no running water, hard beds, no blankets. It's about 90° in the dorm, and 80 outside. As we walk back down the corridor, we hear from the direction of the stairwell, "I'm not coming HERE when I go to college!", a sentiment with which we all agree.

I go back to the gaming area, wander around the dealer's room and try to look like a shoplifter. I tire of this, and go to the tournament room, and go from board to board chuckling at people's play. Everyone thinks I'm denigrating his play, and gets upset. I chuckle all the more.

Nothing much happens. Some more nothing much happens. Scott Rosenberg meets Robert Sacks, and the start yelling at each other. Eventually, overcome with ennui, I go into Scott's dungeon, along with some other people. He won't let me be a dwarvish cleric. Even though I let him be a chaotic sado-masochist homosexual phase spider cleric in mine. Dud.

I dud out, and manage to organize a KINGMAKER game with Robert Sacks and Scott and Dil and a bunch of other people. We go to Sacks' room, and start to play. Scott duds out; he is overly flippant. We chuck him out, and a large percentage of the players decide to go as well. We are left with four players. Somebody knocks at the door. I open it. Lying on the floor is a can of beer. I open it. Somebody has shaken it up. There is beer all over the

floor.

After about 5 or 6 hours of playing a four-player KINGMAKER game, I go to bed. After all, I've got that D&D thing with Gygax in the morning.

In the morning, I discover that Gygax's dungeon is a total dud. As Stephen Tihor relies too much upon random traps and I place too much reliance upon what I conceive to be amusing situations (but which the players don't always so conceive), Mr. Gygax placed an extreme reliance upon traps of various sorts. The dungeon was, in my opinion, totally duddish.

((Please note that this is not to say that Gygax cannot build a competent dungeon; I have a number of friends who went on a wilderness expedition with him at the DipCon, and report that it was excellent.))

And the people I was playing with were none too bright, either. The first entrance we tried to the dungeon was a trap. As we walk down the corridor, a sliding panel closes behind us. We continue to walk, and the corridor dead-ends. We search for secret doors, secret panels. We search the floor for secret doors. We poke the ceiling with 10' poles. Nothing.

Oh Caller has someone cast a Passwall spell at the end of the corridor. We extend the corridor 10' into the solid rock. Our air is running out.

We realize we're in a trap, and the only way is back out. The caller has someone cast a lightning bolt at the sliding panel. We blast a 3" hole in the panel. The room is filled with ozone. Half of us faint.

The Gm is magnanimous; we don't die immediately. The caller spends half an hour dithering about what to do. Eventually, we cast Stone to Flesh on the panel, and hack our way out.

It's time for the Diplomacy tournament. We've spent two hours doing nothing. I leave.

The Diplomacy tournament is filled with people who don't know a Lepanto from Mother Hittons Littul Kittons. My ally fails to attack our common enemy on the first turn. I ask him why. Very pained, he is; "What?? You want me to violate another player's neutrality on the first turn?????"

Dumbshit.

I die. Come back tomorrow, they say. Sure. With my $2\frac{1}{2}$ points.

I wander around some more, doing nothing in particular. Al Nofi says he's organizing a kind of impromptu Designer's Panel, to be held outdoors in a grove. No chance to organize it, really, but 75 people show up anyway. I wonder what would happen if the Con had enough sense to organize something like this.

The rest of that night is a fog. I think I went to bed relatively early. Like 2 or 4.

I get up an hour late for the Dip tournament. Go over there anyway---nothing else to do. Mike Rocamora resigns his 8 unit Turkey in my favor. Not sure why, but there it is, I louse up my build. It hurts, especially when I stab my ally, Russia, and I need that army.

.....\$.....

IT COMES IN THE MAIL, Ned Brooks, 713 Paul St, Newport News, Virginia, 23605.
Interesting zine, in a sense. The editor chronicles, day by day, what he gets in the mail. Each day he lists and reviews the zines he gets and capsulizes the letters. Apparently available for trade or somethingorother.

KRANOR-RIL, CHip Charnley, 1545 Breton Rd, SE, East Grand Rapids, Michigan,
49506 6/82.

ASHWING, Frank De**b**ton, 14654 8 Av, SW; Seattle, WA; 98166. Available for the usual
As good as ever.

NO, Ruth Berman, 5620 Edgewater Boulevard, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 55417
1/350

KABALLAH, 25-33 48th St, Long Island City, NY, 11103. 5/42
Also ceasing publication. What's going on? Anyway, I don't have to send
HIM a freebie---he contributes. Nyahahaha.

THE HAVEN HERALD, Stephen Tihor, 122 Henry Hall, Princeton University,
Princeton, NJ, 08540. SASE, I'd imagine.

THE HAVEN HERALD is an irregular zine printed by Stephen occasionally, and contains news about his D&D land, additional rules, and so on. This issue contained rules for anew class, Empaths.

THE JARACOSTA JOURNAL, Scott Rosenberg, 182-31 Radnor Rd, Jamaica, NY, 11432. SASE.

TJJ is Scott's equivalent to the HAVEN HERALD. It prints new about Scott's world and his rule changes. It is usually smaller, as a lot of Scott's information is printed in THH, since Scott's world and Teebs are connected.

LILLIPUT c/o Me is dead. The sole game has been transferred to Ben Grossman's zine, THE PREDAWN LEFTIST.

URF DURFAL c/o Me is about to print its fifth issue. I'm presently running the following Dipvariants; Excommunication; Near Utter Chaos; 260 AD; Dilatory/Diluvian; and Stab-Happy. As well, I'm running an open-ended FRIGATE variant called FRIGG IT!. And I've got openings in PACIFICA I, 1618, DIPLOMAFIA, DOWNFALL OF THE LOTR AND THE RETURN OF THE KING II, WORLD WAR III, WAR IN THE AIR, GAMBLING DIPLOMACY, MAGIC DIPLOMACY II, ANACHRONIST DIPLOMACY and INDOESIAN DIPLOMACY. And, of course, one can join FRIGG IT! at any time. No game fee; merely maintain a subscription to Urf Durfal. And a sub is cost plus postage.

FIRE THE ARQUEBUSIERS, c/o Me will print its first issue late this September. It will be the fourth D&D magazine if you don't count THH and TJJ, and sixth if you do. ((The other three being KRANOR-RIL, ALARUMS & EXCURSIONS, and a zine that I'm told Spartan is putting out.)) It will be 36 pages, irregular, at the same price as GIGO. The first issue will have articles on the addition of two new classes to D&D (Martial Artists and Empaths,) adding Sex to D&D, a new class of magical items (Herbs and Spices), a rather funny serialized story by Adam Kananof on a dungeon trip in a typical New York dungeon (called "As the Nexus Turns") and more, if that doesn't fill the 36 pages. Send me some money (Yes, do. Preferably, without asking for anything in return.)

SOL III, Rebecca Baggett, 8008 Old Stage Rd, Raleigh, NC, 27603. Has ceased publication for the time being, at least. Or so Becky tells me. Oh, yeah, that's right. I printed the letter.

VALINOR, Mike Muchnik, 2520 Hyacinth Ct, Westbury, NY, 11590 x. \$1.50/10. VALINOR is one of the best new zines to appear in recent months. Its first issue had an extraordinary number of articles for a first issue, and the editor seems mature and intelligent--a quality which seems strangely lacking in other new Dip editors. The zine is definitely worth the incredibly small price. The only drawback is the fact that the thing is dittoed.

DIMAN, Brad Hessel, 15 Oak Av, Tarrytown, NY 10591. 1/15¢. Another excellent new Dipzine. The editor was apparently been in and out of the hobby for quite a while, and has now decided to pub. The zine is concerned with much other than the Dip hobby, and the amount of press is staggering. Wish I could get my subscribers to write that much press for Urf Durfal!

DYNASTY, Adam Gruen, 470 North St, Harrison, NY, 10528. 10/¢2. Yet another new Dipzine. I'm afraid I don't think as much of this one, though.

THE PREDAWN LEFTIST, Ben Grossman, 29 E 9 #9, NY, NY, 10003. 10/¢2. Last issue I was noncommittal on this zine. The first issue was rotten. But since then, the zine has gotten better in a steady progression. Definitely worthwhile.

According to LOCUS, Orlando had 298 votes for Worldcon site, New York had 111, Washington 91, and Philadelphia 28. Membership until the end of September will be \$5 attending and \$3.50 supporting.

HUGO AWARDS:

Novel: The Dispossessed, Ursula Le Guin
 Novella: A Song for Lya, George Martin
 Novellette: Adrift off the Islets of Langerhans, Harlan Ellison (NOT AGAIN!)
 Short Story: The Hole Man, Larry Niven
 Editor: Ben Bova
 Artist: Kelly Freas
 Dramatic Presentation: Young Frankenstein
 Fanzine: The Alien Critic
 Fan Writer: Richard E Geis
 Fan Artist: Bill Rotsler

Campbell Award: P J Plauger
 Gandalf Award: Fritz Leiber

THIS IS DIPCON???? HOW COME EVERYONE IS PLAYING D&D?

On Tuesday, I was in New Hampshire. On Friday, I was in Chicago.

It's not really as simple as it sounds. On Wednesday, I was in New York; and on Thursday in Youngstown.

I wended my way from New Hampshire to New York on Wednesday, fully intending to print up GIGO that day. HA! It's now a month later, and NOW I'm getting around to typing up the stencils. Auuugh.

On Wednesday afternoon, I phoned Edi Birsan, and he told me how to get to his house, and to be there early the next morning, around 11. ((Yes, that's early.))

I braved the terrors of the New York subway, and made it into Queens in time to be early. I crammed into Edi's Vega, and we started out across the wastelands of New Jersey. We started playing a D&D game, in my gungeon.

In the car with me, as well as Edi, were Arnold Proujansky, and Evan. The game was a rather exhausting experience for all involved.

I believe I've mentioned one of the NY Conspiracy words earlier this issue---"dud." "To prouj" is another. Arnold's Conspiracy nickname is Prouj. He has a rather annoying habit of exhausting every possibility in a D&D game. Feeling for secret doors along every inch of corridor, poking the ceiling with 10' poles as he goes along, carefully examining the floor, using Detect Magic or Evil or whatever constantly, smashing chests to pieces to ensure that no secret compartments were missed, and so on.

To give an example; at one point, in my dungeon, Arnold came across a neutral warvish thief. The thief tried to pickpocket the party, but was unsuccessful. After intense questioning, Arnold killed him (which he could do with no problem, since he was neutral.) He searched his body and found a very few Gold Pieces. He took the dwarves' clothing off, ripped it to shreds and d

Finding nothing, he proceeded to light a fire and cremate the dwarf. Once the fire had burnt itself out, he sifted through the ashes, and found a few pebbles. He took them. They turned out to be gall stones.

Evan, too, is something of a phenomenon. He plays games---any game--- with an intenseness not to be believed. He often fails to distinguish between a joke and criticism, and is this often the butt of many jokes. In D&D, he plays very selfishly, points out the "rules" to the gamesmaster at horrible inappropriate times (like when the gamesmaster has made clear that he isn't playing by those rules), plays rather selfishly (except when he is told that he must give things away to appear to be lawful) ad nauseum. He has an annoying habit of wearing down the gamesmaster; if he wants something, he pleads for it, and continues to plead for it until the gamesmaster gives in. In this game, he plead with me because he wanted to be a Ranger, even though I didn't know the rules for Rangers. Eventually, I gave in.

Eventually, we arrived in Youngstown, where we spent the night. Rising and failing to shine the next morning, we set out at a perverted hour in the morning, getting a beautiful view of the industrial area.

We got to Chicago late Friday, registered at the hotel, rejoined the rest of the New York group, and trooped around the dealer's room. Nothing of particular interest was being vended, so we escaped to a conference room in time for the IDA General Meeting.

The General Meeting went well. There was a satisfactory amount of fireworks, although everything seemed to be peaceful until Gordon Anderson rose to make his famous statement. I believe I mentioned it elsewhere in this issue. He stated that his company, "VIKING SYSTEMS INC" had trademarked the name "DipCon." Somebody questioned the legality of that act, and Gordon said something about "abandonment of use."

Nice fireworks. Despicable action. Destroying traditions of the hobby.

Right on. Just what we need. That's what N3F needs, too; a couple of good feuds. That'd liven it up.

Getting off the subject, though.

That night, I played D&D in Stephen Tihor's dungeon, with my magic-user, Cheech Wizard. I didn't do too badly.

Two of our party-members, a lawful fighter and a semi-insane cleric walked out on our party, along with all their hirelings.

We went on for a while, and it wasn't until it was too late that we realized that all we had left was a third-level cleric, a single fighter, and four or five magic-users. A great preponderance of magic-users.

So we got out as fast as possible. Which wasn't too fast, considering that we'd walked through a transporter to the fifth level.

I actually got quite a bit of sleep, and managed to get up in time for the Dippournament. I was Austria, and managed to hold out long enough to score reasonably well, at least by the somewhat silly system the tournament was using. I was placed on the third board.

After eating in a rather greasy place down the street, I returned and started in on the next round as France.. England and Germany wanted a three-way alliance against the rest of the board, and I agreed. But I was getting a bit fed up with three-way Western alliances. Five of the six boards in the first round had had three-way Western alliances, and I had neraly been destroyed by one on my board.

So, when Russia attacked Germany, I thought I saw a chance, and stabbed Germany. Just in time to be stabbed by the Italians. I see-sawed once more, and turned to face the Italians. I ended the game with the normal five French centers. Dud.

I left the game, and wandered over to a nearby table.

It seemed that in a D&D game in Stephen Tihor's dungeon, Walt Buchanan's character had twice killed Howard Mahler's character. The first time was excusable, as Walt didn't really know what was going on, but the second time was mere flippancy.

Walt's character plead stupidity; thus, his character was known as "Walter the Dumb." And Howard's character was dead, and thus was known as "Wilber the Dead." Wilber the Dead presented evidence via a Clerical "Speak with the Dead" spell.

Tim (Robert Lipton) and Nick Ulanov were seated at one end of the table. They had rather foolishly agreed to pay 1000 Gold Pieces for each word they spoke during the trial to Walter the Dumb. They kept on interrupting, and Scott quietly kept a tally of the number of words they were speaking. The verdict of the court eventually was that Walt had turned neutral by his actions.

Later that evening, Scott and Stephen started trips in adjacent rooms, as there were too many people who wanted to play for just one expedition. I went in Scott's dungeon. I don't really remember what happened there, but I definitely do remember the aftermath.

Half way through the expedition, Bob Lipton had to leave, so he left me in custody of his character. I was the obvious choice, as I had apprenticed my character to his.

Once out of the dungeon, Mike Rocamora's character polymorphed Walter the Dumb into a Beholder, and the Beholder came looking for Wilber the No Longer Dead. Wilber told me that Lipton had promised to defend him if Walter tried anything, so I told him I'd help him. He hired a couple of hundred bowmen, and took them, along with Tim and Cheech, to a strategic hill. Soon, the Beholder appeared in the distance. Tim and the Beholder, with Cheech contributing an occasional spell, settled down to a Battle Royal, exchanging spells at a ferocious rate.

Soon it became apparent that we were losing. Scott was using an incredibly stupid system for resolving multi-man combat---he interpreted the Chainmail system to indicate that 20 men could only inflict as many hits as one man alone.

Mike's character started towards the battlefield, as we later found out, to help kill the Beholder---he didn't really want Tim dead

It was then that somebody noticed that Mike couldn't have polymorphed Walt

into a Beholder in the first place, because Mike wasn't high enough level to take a Polymorph spell.

So much for that.

The next day (Sunday), the Diplomacy tournament was again in the morning. I discovered that I was Turkey on board 3. Or maybe it was 4. Anyway, I managed to hold out against an Austro-Russian alliance until the omnipresent Three-way Western alliance made its presence felt and conquered Russia. Austria then made me part of his attempted stalemate line, but the West made some attractive promises, and I stabbed Austria. At the end of the game, I was once again an Austrian puppet, with two centers.

Apparently, the tournament was the last thing at the con. The Buchanans packed up and prepared to go. The conspiracy bestowed honorary Conspiracyship upon the two Buchanan children, and taught them several phrases; "dud!" "Besh is a dud" among them. When we tried to get them to say "Buch is a ud," they wouldn't, though. I guess blood is thicker than Conspiracy.

We saw them off, and, a short time later, the Michigan and points north crowd. Points north being Canada. And then duded around for a while, doing nothing in particular.

Plans were made to play D&D, Middle Earth VIII, Utter Chaos, and Utter Chaos Middle Earth VIII, in quick succession, but none came to fruition. So we went to bed.

In Edi's room, I found Len Lakofka's clipboard, which I appropriated. It's very useful. On the top, it has two little address stickers; one says "Leonard Lakofka," and the other says "Lenny Da Lizzard." Must be schizophrenic.

The next morning, we rose at 6. I won't call that a disgusting hour; I merely thought of it as having taken a short nap in the evening, and waking up a few hours later to continue. I was in the same car, so I continued the campaign. The previous night I, with some help from Mat Diller, had come up with a set of Sex rules for D&D, and I applied them to the game.

This time, the player's decided to go on a Wilderness expedition, on a journey to visit the King of the Elves, in the Land of Elves. They journeyed south to the great road. On the way, they met a company of ogres, who were in the possession of the sister-blade of Stormbringer. The Ranger didn't really realize what it was, so he picked it up. Not too bright, that. The blade now thinks it's his.

They continued, and eventually hit the Great Road, and headed eastward. They took a wrong turning, and met the Lord Haphaestus, Guardian of the South, Protector of Ambrusil, Scourge of the Barbarous South. He, being a paladin, made the party his "guests." He was a bit suspicious, and not unduly so; the party was composed of a bisexual female magic-user with an oral fixation, an homosexual martial artist, and a fighter. As well as a mule-skinner, a cleric hireling, and the slowly mouldering body of a dead elf. (The elf had been killed by the Stormbringer-sister sword, and the party hoped that it could somehow regain its soul from the blade.) And a Ranger. The Ranger and the cleric being the only two lawful characters. The Lord's homosexual female lawful magic-user fell madly in love with the expedition's magic user ((I can't help it; when I roll 00, I roll 00.)) Eventually they managed to escape, and made their merry way onward to

At 3 in the morning, we got in. Edi, the only driver in the car, was just about dead. I think the only thing that kept him awake was the D&D game.

STAR TREK LIVES!

Jacqueline Lichtenberg, Sondra Marshak and Joan Winston

In a conversation with someone one day, that person remarked "Life is more complicated than it seems." My immediate reaction was "Wrong. Life is less complicated than people make it."

The more I think about the latter statement, the more sensible it seems to me. Far too many people have, throughout history, knocked themselves out over artificial problems. Is Christ of the same substance of God, or of a like substance? How many angels can dance on a ~~pin~~ the head of a pin? What does Faulkner really mean when he says "Shimmering delapidation"?

And so on, etc. So much of "philosophy", and so much offfictional dissection is sheer, unadulterated bullshit.

To make an obvious point, does it really matter whether one has free will or one's path is determined at birth by the fates? Will sure knowledge of one or the other change one's life? Will it change the fate of humanity? Does it really MATTER?

To make another point; does it matter whether Darl, in AS I LAY DYING is a paranoid schizophrenic, or an artist? Will knowledge on way or the other influence any one? Is such knowledge even meaningful?

No.. I have come to the conclusion that philosophy is bullshit. And that dissection of fiction is bullshit.

I admit the possibility that I am a little mind, that cannot grasp the true, awful significance of the dilemmas of philosophy. I admit the possibility that I am so crass as to be unable to see the significance, the greatness in being able to fully understand in every minute detail, a work of art--- to an extent that even the artist did not understand.

I admit such a possibility. But I find it unlikely.

Unfortunately, this book is, for the most part, one or the other; philosophy or dissection of fiction. A large part of the book talks about Roddenberry's philosophy of the cliched "peace and brotherhood." And another large part talks about the reasons that, say, Spock is attractive to so many, and that the show is so popular.

The book very neatly devides~~x~~ the attractiveness of Star Trek into five parts. The Discover Effect, The Tailored Effect, The Spock Charisma Effect, The Optimism Effect, and The Goal Effect. I kid you not. These "effects" are capitalized throughtout the book. They are treated as the sum total of Star Trek.

I had a very difficult time reading the book. After every fifth paragraph, I began to think of gum-chewing teenager wearing tee-shirts, pencilling "How true!" in the margins. I'd read some. Then I'd through the book away in disgust, crying "BULLSHIT!"

Agg. Eventually, I gave up.

THERE IS NO PAGE 34!!!

After I finished ~~by~~ printing up page 33, and after I realized that 35 was on the back of 33, I looked around to find 34. I looked high and low, hither and yohn. No 34 to be found.

I returned to my stencils, and printed up the rest of the zine before continuing back to finish up this mess.

According to the copy I wrote for the DipCon report, there should be nothing between where page 33 left off, and where 35 started up. I must thus assume that there never was a page 34, and that something is fucked up.

Thus; there is no page 34. There are a few words left off the last sentence on 33, which should be leading into 35. After the trip was over, we got into New York.

So don't worry about it.

I've got to, though. I've still this entire page to fill up.

Well, some more Monty Python biographies, I guies.....there are also some on the back page, in case you're interested.

TERRY GILLIAM- For all his lovable American accent and tomboy good-humor, Terry is, at heart, a lovable American-speakin g good-humored tomboy, and not a dry rot and de-infestation operative as some people have claimed (See: MY SON THE DEINFESTATION OPERATIVE, by Mrs. O. Gilliam, published by Faber and Faber, 1961.) Terry has never been specifically interested in the structural rnovation of building facilities, nor has he ever become President of the United States of America, as other people have claimed. (see: MY SON WAS A DEINFESTATION OPERATIVE, by Mr. O. Gilliam, published by McMillan 1962). As far as politics are concerned, his record is spotless---he has never gone in for them at all.

Terry looks forward to a future with some major companies, including ITT, but it is quite likely that he won't get one. His hair is still long, and his legs are only bandy if you look at them in a certain way.

ERIC IDLE- Eric Idle was born in Leicester on the 8th of January, 1841. the son and daughter of a Chief Inspector of Police and Mrs. Idle, who is still undead. He was sanitized 9 weeks after birth, and remains the only member of the Python team to be so.

Eric soon became passionately fond of Rugby football, mountainering and fashion magazines for which to this day he still has several lifetime subscriptions. He/She was edicated at Melton Mowbray Grammar School and Emmanuel College, Cambridge, where it took a degree in Medicine. The thing later qualified as a doctor at St. Bartholomew Hospital, London. There the creature first took to writing second-rate radio comedies and scripts for the then-famous David Frost (sic.) It was then that the beast met up with Fellini and ended a short relationship. Having no work one X-Mas, and having given up Ear Nose and Throat surgery and given up saying having, the object wrote bad lines for Petual Clark shows. There the entity's creature ended, but by now the excrecence of protoplasm took a fresh interest in old empty Germolene tins and soon became known as an involver of men.

Then, thankfully, I noticed that not all the chapters were about some "Effect" or other. So I read the chapters by Joan Winston.

One was about her experiences as a member of the Star Trek convention committee. The other was about her visit to the Star Trek set on the last week of filming.

Both were excellent. They were well-written. Amusing. Informative, funny, interesting. In the desert of the rest of the book, they were fantastic.

I urge all who have an interest in Star Trek to purchase the book, and read chapters 3 and 7. The rest can be disposed of with the Kitty Litter.

SOME MORE LETTERS THAT I THOUGHT I DIDN'T HAVE ROOM FOR, BUT NOW THAT I'VE DECIDED TO MAKE THIS ISSUE 48, PAGES, I DO.

Douglas Carey, 11355 Lincoln St, Robertsville, OH, 44670

.....Now, to feminism. As you say, the reviews of THE FEMALE MAN were not reviews. But don't feel bad about it. Check out F&SF, Analog and Galaxy/If's reviews of the book. Altho more professional in execution, they did the same thing--commented on the role of women more than the book. Esp. the role of women in sf.

My two dents runs like this... I'm going to compare two women authors, Lisa Tuttle and Brenda Pearce. Both had recent stories in Analog; the former "Windhaven," the latter "Crazy Oil." Both were hard sf. Also, both had lead characters as women. However, the Pearce story had the fault of knocking you over the head with the fact that Katherine was a woman; the story centered around her womanhood and by stressing the fact that she was of the female gender, proved that her position of importance was a quirk. Tuttle's story had a person- Maris. She had, because of tradition, lost her humanity---not her femininity. Her society accepted her as a person despite her sex, rejected her as a person because of her orphan background.

Remember the Vulcan IDIC? The trick is to realize the differences and unite them without destroying the differences. Not by eliminating the opposite party. SF is unique in that it promotes change by portraying change after it has occurred. It does not (or should not) promote change by showing what happens without it. Grufen believe in starflight because we read it all the time. We did not get into the habit by reading stories in which starflight was prohibited.

From a personal point of view, I treat women with much more deference than men--as a Gentler Sex. A male I treat badly until he proves my equal, a woman I treat as my superior--unless she tries to lower herself to the "equality" of men. That raises my dander and invokes an extreme dislike of the person involved.

Is Kasanof's TIG replacement coming out soon? ((In about 6 months, I think.)) How is Mayor Beame's lynching committee coming along? ((Well, we've got another three months before we have to start buying machine guns to protect ourselves because there's no police, and start dumping our garbage in the East river because noone will collect it.))

Doug signs the letter off with the phrase "Rklioy Swa Ton Rhee." I believe this is because I often sign my letters with "Rklioy Swa Rhee." This phrase is a whatchamacallit of "Kilroy Was Here." It originally arose in a short

which was written by me, Adam Kasanof and Scott Rosenberg.

EXCERPT FROM "MY SUMMER WEEKEND ON NANTUCKER"

An orange polka-dot sphere of light and a pink trapezoid landed. Two things which I assumed to be Spicans jumped out of the sphere, and some mushy blue Vegans tumbled from the trapezoid. They splattered on impact, creating a blue, gucky, slithery mess that spread slowly. One of the dying Vegans managed to squeak "Ik nee-a Vi zerbl." I was informed later that this was Vegan for "Gravity!" The Spicans, large hairy things with horns, cavorted and cajoled over the field, making no noise. One of the Indians said "Me Makum good statue, and sell to Great White Father."

I got up on a boulder, and shouted "Friends, Spicans, Vegans, Crusaders, Indians, Sirians, Phoenicians and Lizard-People! Now is the time for all good---er---creatures to come to the aid of their time continuum!"

They replied "We come to bury you, not to praise you." The Spicans said "Yrrk ip okk syrvo eeasee?" They advanced at a gallop and produced magenta belts that they wove around their midriff. I turned to the Arcturians, to discover they had left without a trace. I quickly shouted "wait!" at the Spicans. They stopped dead in their tracks, and I turned to face them.

"Now, you guys want to kill me, right?"

"Rklloy Swa Rhee!"

There you are. I admit, that's a bit confused, but the entire story is a mish-mosh of confusion. Eventually, the protagonist, who is never named, manages to save the Outer Galactic Periphery from a temporal collapse, and destroys---or thinks he destroys---J.A.M.D.I.NEE.P.N.A., an illogical computer who is masterminding the entire temporal confusion. In a couple of other stories, the hero, who is a member of the Inter-Galactic Time Patrol conquers the forces of Temporal Chaos, and allows Right and Justice, in the form of the Time Patrol bureaucracy, to triumph.

ANYWAY, BACK TO ~~SOME~~ MORE LETTERS

Metagaming Concepts, PO Box 15346, Austin, TX, 78761

Thanks very much for the comments on TSG and SC, nice. ((The Space Gamer and Stellar Conquest.)) Keep at the zine and it will shape up, the content is interesting and varied enough to go along way with. My biggest objection was to the heavy commentary you dispersed through everything. Mimeo is bad enough, I like comments at the end of things.

A comment for John on computers, nice but I'll never be able to buy one---so what. How about notes on small computers that we'll all be able to buy in the next few years, now that micro-processor technology is here. Big computers may be like dinosaurs in all but giant data situations in the next few years. Try ADC, MITS, WANG, and anyone else with programmable calculators who is moving into bigger applications. I'll buy a computer before a second car, that's for sure.

Again, thanks for the plugs, I still don't know if zine plugs sell, but it's nice to see them in print anyway.

Charles Jacques, 199 Payne Rd, Scarborough, ME, 04074
 I am undud---I am undud. One hell of a way to waste space. Why not waste the space constructively. What does dud mean, for instance (What the hell DOES it mean, anyway?)

About your "Editor Fills this Space" thing. Great. Glad you have decided to keep it. Ofttimes I think it among the best things in the zine. About playtesting for SPI. How does one get on there list? It sounds like something interesting to do, in one's spare time..... The Gallic Wars? That is going to be tough. Planning out superiority troop power and weapons superiority is going to be tough. Whatever happened to Saucerblitz, anyway? Oh, eys, I look forward to lengthy, detailed reviews of Origins I and DipCon.

W.....William G. Bliss should be strung up by his balls. "Star Trek.. ...typical boob tube?" ARRRRGHHHHH! You can tell him---ah, forget it. About these dayglow orange sticker, they are supposedly to help move mail faster to where it is going. Revised zip code, if you will. Actually, its just a bunch of shit the post office prints up to justify postage hikes. I did like Bliss's explanation of fantasy, and his tirade on unsafe buildings, I'll give him that.

I am finding out that everything Houarner writes is good. Even his letters. And, hey, he thinks my stuff is okay, too. (Maybe we should set up a Mutual Admiration Society. After all, we frenchmen have to stick together.)

((FRENCHMEN! I am quite sure that a gentleman such as Mr. Houarner has better sense than to be associated with such petty Quebecois as yourself.))

I liked your pun about Armenians being called turkeys. Quite good. Score one for Armenia, Sludge of the Ocean.

.....What's going on? My page 20 was upside down!,....The Lunacon Report was okay. Not great, though. Usually I like a good balance of con activity, what I did. This report was too much "What I did." You're slipping.

....As to my magnificent comics column---yes, you are right. Since intimate contact results in nuclear explosions, it is brief and infrequent between Nova and E-Man. Their last kiss, as far as I can tell, removed 57th Street.

Remember last time I said you were paranoid? Now I have proof. You accused me and Houarner of being in conspiracy against you. Rediculous. We don't even know each other. And they'll bloody well write to me if they want, so there!

A Canadian comic company? Captain Canuck? If that isn't a put on, and you can send me an address to write for info, I'll do a whole column on it. Canadian comics that are original are few and far between. (Funny. Notice a Canadian hero is coming out roughly the same time Canadians are getting ripping mad about American influence in their country. Symbolism? Irony?)

SPI doesn't keep a list of subscribers. Anyone who shows up at their offices on 6:00PM Friday, 44 E 23 St, 9th floor, who has a reasonable knowledge of wargames will most probably be able to playtest.

The only information I have on Captain Canuck is the following article I saw in The Journal, Box 1286, Exxes, Ontario, NOR 1E0.

"On March 20th, Canada's only existing comic book company will come into being, having distributed 200,000 copies of CAPTAIN CANUCK #1.

"This is the country's first venture of this type in a long time, although there are custom-made publishers, such as Comic Book World of Nova Scotia.

"The new company is called Comely Comix. Richard D. Comely is the President of the publishing house, D.J. Abbott is Advertising Sales Director.

"Initially, distribution wasn't planned for outside of the country, but at last look, plans were being changed to include distribution in the United States."

"Captain Canuck T-shirts, posters, bumper-stickers and other paraphernalia are being planned, Captain Canuck being the major character.

"We'll have more on Comely Comix next issue, hopefully."

I never got the next issue, but you might write to TJ if you want information.

+++++
WARGAMING COLUMN, OR A REASONABLE FACSIMILE THEREOF

By me. Mark Edwards has dudded out.

My last wargaming column, as just about anyone could see, was a total dud. It was done on the spur of the moment to fill space, and was neither very good nor very complete.

Essentially, my dilemma is that I'd run out of things to say about wargaming. This issue, I won't try to say anything; all I'll do is try to talk about the games which I know will be coming out in the near future.

At the moment, the West Wall Quads, the Blue and Gray II Quads, The Punic Wars, Firefight, Invasion American, Dixie and The War in the West are in various stages of playtesting.

The West Wall Quads are four games depicting battles in France in 1944. Some of the SPI staff I've talked to are under the impression that they are good, but none of the playtesters have told me so. In fact, some of the playtesters did not want to play one of the West Walls so much that he was driven to play Firefight I. The system is, of course, similar to that used in the Modern Quads. Which says it all, as far as quality is concerned.

The Blue and Gray II Quads are essentially just 4 more games of the same sort as the first Blue and Gray. And they are about as good---quite.

The Punic Wars in an interesting game. The system is loosely based on that

of Frederick the Great. That is to say, units themselves do not move; leader units must move them.

The game began as a hex game, went to area movement, and now is back to hexes again. But, even though it is a hex game, the map is divided into provinces---Zeugitania, Numidia, Novo Carthago, Tartessus, Hispania, Samnium and the like. Each province produces so much treasury points each turn, and can support so many units---somewhat like Fall of Rome. Essentially, one player or the other must gain control of a certain number of provinces to win. The combat system is rather strange---rather than using the "1 to 1" column on a 1-1 attack, one adds one to the die roll, adds 2 to the die roll on a "2 to 1" attack, and so on.

As well, the game has rules for Numidian, Syracusan ~~and~~ Scitlain and Southern Italian defection, Hispanic and Gallic revolt, and other diplomatic events. The probability of an event occurring is based upon the number of losses each player takes in a turn.

The game now seems to be eminently balanced---it takes about 20 years to determine the conflict. Which is fairly realistic, I suppose.

One of the problems the developer is now having is reducing the rules to eight pages. He's got to get it down to eight pages, as that is the limit for S&T games.

Firefight is a section-level tactical game in modern-day Europe. It uses what is a further development of the Simove system; a sequential-sequential system. Essentially, one player fires one unit, then the other player fires one unit, and so on, until all units have fired. Then one player moves one unit, and so on.

Since Firefight is being paid for by the Army (although it will be published commercially,) it is being done on four levels of increasing complexity; Firefight I, Firefight II, Firefight III, and Firefight IV. As of this date, the rules of Firefight I and II have been worked out, but not the latter two.

Firefight I is, unfortunately, about on a level with Chutes and Ladders. There are no complications; essentially the rules cover nothing more than Movement, Direct Fire and Opportunity Fire. Hopefully, later versions will be much more complex.

Battle For America, I think, has been adequately covered in other sources. Briefly, it is a division-level game of the invasion of America in the 1980's by the South American Union, the European Socialist Coalition, and the Pan Asian League. The premise is that the American fleet has already been wiped out.

I think it's a rather stupid premise myself---if SPI is going to do future games, they ought to have SOME basis in reality---but then, it feedbacked well. What the subscribers say goes, within limits.

Dixie is a folio-sized game dealing with an alternate history in which the South won the Civil War, and a rematch is fought in the 1940's. The game is somewhat slow moving, and the combat system is a bit reminiscent of that of WWI, but, all in all, the game is reasonably good.

WAR IN THE WEST I'm not even going to talk about. Gawd. Suffice it to say that it's got 6 or 8 or 10 maps (the number keeps on increasing everytime I talk to someone) and some obscene amount of counters, and production and air units and naval rules and and and and

The next two games which should start playtesting will be RUSSIAN REVOLUTION and the 30 YEARS WAR QUAD. There will be five battles in the 30 Year's War Quad, which is why it's called a Quad, right? Actually, one of the five games will go into S&T, and the rest will be printed normally. Russian Civil War will be the first of the Power Politics series.

THE Power Politics Series is an offshoot of the game KINGMAKER. Kingmaker is a game put out by a British company called Philmar. Essentially, each player (up to a maximum of 40, or something like that) takes the place of one faction of nobles in the War of the Roses. Each faction manoeuvres around the board, attempting to gain possession of the Pretenders to the Throne, and attempting to kill off any pretenders not possessed by him. (Ghosh, my grammar is disintegrating.)

Anyway, the Power Politics Series will use the same idea as Kingmaker; there will be a undetermined number of players, each of whom attempts to fulfill some condition or other. They will have a high element of chance, and all sorts of strange things can happen. In Kingmaker, for instance, a plague can suddenly appear which wipes out an entire faction. In Russian Civil War, almost anything can happen---from American entering the war on the sides of the whites to disease decimating all of Siberia.

Essentially, there will be four sets of mutually apposing forces in the Russian Revolution; Whites, Reds, Blues (Foreign interventionists) and Greens (Nationalist groups---Ukrainians, Caucasians, Armenians and so on.) Each player takes a number of leaders, often of opposing factions. The fact that his leaders are of opposing factions will put him under restraint, but he must still attempt to make certain objectives.

Another series which SPI is now trying to create is the Role Playing Series. This will be based upon DUGNEONS AND DRAGONS and EN GARDE!, two games in which each player takes the part of a person in a given time period, and plays it out, doing things which persons of that type might do. SPI hasn't actually started work on any yet, but it is thought that such games will be feedbacked in the next issue of S&T.

Other games which SPI is either beginning to do work on or is considering are WARSAW PACT REBELLION, which would either be a strategic game on that subject or a Quad game depicting battles of such a rebellion; StarSoldier, also to be designed by Simonsen; and an American Revolution Quad.

+++++ Palindromes make wonderful spacefiller;

Doc, note I dissent. A fast never prevents a fatness. I diet on cod.
 Lewd I did live & evil did I dwell
 He goddamn mad dog, eh?
 Piel's Lager on red rum did murder no regal sheep.
 Roma sumus Amor.
 Madam, I'm Adam.

This issue (month? Half-year?) I intend to deal with strange, interesting, or unique hardware and software. Strange things intrigue me, being somewhat of a strange thing myself.

TERMINALS

There are a plethora of odd terminals, CRT's and communication devices on the market. There are hand-held CRT's, large mini-computers disguised as terminals, heat-printers which work by melting wax and couplers which lose bits of information.

The smallest terminal I've ever seen was shown at Boskone. It was a Termiflex HT/2. It is hand-held, has a two-line display, and retains a 1000 character memory. In actuality, the HT/2 is not the smallest terminal made by Termiflex. The HT/1 with only one line of display is smaller and negligably cheaper. For those odd people interested in such a device, the address of Termiflex is:

Termiflex Corporation
17 Airport Road
PO Box 1123
Nashua, New Hampshire, 03060,
Tel: (603) 889-3983

The nicest CRT or visual display (there is a difference, but...) I have ever seen in fairly constant use is a PLATO terminal, hooked up to the University of Illinois CDC 6400. It is capable of animation, which implies the ability to selectively erase, of copying what is on the screen to micro-fiche, internally, of sensing pressure on the screen and many other amusing things. But the Terminal (specially constructed for use with PLATO) is only half of its beauty. The other half is the PLATO system, which is capable of utilizing this particular visual display to the utmost. With it, one can play a game of Milles Borne with the 64000 drawing the cards. One can draw crude phalusses which float up, down, and around the screen. One can fly an airplane simulator, play chess, or, and this is the great blessing, attempt to send the system down with the encouragement of the staff.

COMPUTERS

Only one item this time about computers. The Xerox 530. The Graduate School of Business Administration (of NYU) recently got rid of its IBM 1130, and replaced it with this machine. For \$300 more per month (very little in terms of computer renting and leasing) The Xerox 530 can replace the 1130 as a Remote Job Entry site, (although Xerox calls RJE "sattelite processing.") and also includes a Magnetic Tape unit, background as well as foreground capacity, a couple of extra disk drives, and a protect feature for security purposes. There is only one problem. Xerox just went out of the computer field. They have to support BBA's hardware, but as for its software, well, some people are laughing at GBA right now, myself included.

SOFTWARE

A number of interesting, although not all that new facts about software. ATT has a chess game in fortran called COKOV. It plays a fairly good game of computer chess, although not as good as Northwestern's chess program. Snobol, say some of the people I know who work for IBM, may be dropped by our favorite monopoly. IBM may also be coming out with something to replace MFT, although what that something is, I don't know.

I've heard a great many rumors about IBM's FS (Future System). For your convenience, I will list them in order of likelihood.

- 1) The new computer will be the IBM 380. why not?
- 2) The new computer will not be in the 300 series again, why not?
- 3) The new computer will be APL based I'm not sure what the hell this means. Is APL going to replace JCL? Is APL going to be the only time-sharing system? I don't know. What???
- 4) There will be no fixed disk packs. See APL objections
- 5) The system will be PL/I based. Great! I'm ruined.
- 6) There will be no assembler.

I intended to write about mini- and micro-computers this issue, but unfortunately did not do the research that was necessary. Mini- and micro-computers are the wave of the future, but I don't have to like it. I am an old big computer fanatic, and really can't get much joy out of doing things on a small computer. Which is to say, who ever heard of breaking security on an Altair 8800? I will, however, give a brief synopsis on what I know about these idiocies.

MINI-COMPUTERS and MICRO-COMPUTERS

The PDP8 is a nice, outdated mini-computer. It can usually handle Basic and Fortran, as well as an odd thing called Focal. The PDP8 can vary in size and price tremendously. I know someone who has one in his basement which handles only Focal, because of core limitations, and it costs him nothing. He got it for free because someone threw it out. At least that's how the story goes. The PDP8 is graded by letters in most cases. It can be large enough to time-share off (eg, La Salles). I have a friend who has broken the security on a time-shared PDP8. He seems very pleased at that. I'm not very impressed.

The PDP11 is manufactured by Digital, which also makes the PDP8. The 11 is somewhat better, and also somewhat more expensive. The worst and cheapest PDP11 is the PDP11/10. Its uses can vary from programming in Fortran or other high-level languages, to use as a buffer by a large computer. The higher the levels go on PDP11's, the better the computer (which can be used as a stand-alone operation,) and the worse the price.

The Altair 8800. Ugh! Any computer which costs less than the TTY which is interfaced with it should not exist. It is a terrible machine. I have a friend who bought one for \$400, and since then has spent about \$2,000 more just to make the thing work in a sane fashion. Don't be misled by the low price, this is to say. You need to buy so many peripherals, and extra memory to finally get a machine with a decent Basic, a terrible Assembler and maybe a text editor. A true waste of money, unless you really want a super-calculator.

Write to me if you have any questions or comments about anything in this column. Too many people have my address now, so I might as well give it out so it doesn't seem a secret. I don't really like answering letters, so if you have anything that might interest me, I will print it somewhere and give you credit, but I may not send you a thank-you note.

I believe I have one of the most complete Picture files for computers in the world. If you have any pictures that I don't (for example, the over-printed Spock from Princeton or the top view of the Enterprise) I would be most appreciative if you'd tell me. My address is John K. Liberman, 300 Central Park West, NY, NY, 10024. Actually, don't write me unless you really feel that it's important.

While we're on the subject of Apas, John also has said that he might be interested in starting a Pornography apa. The subject matter is, I think, obvious. It might be rather interesting.

Dear Sir:

Being quite taken with the idea of a man with as ridiculous a name as yours I determined to get a photograph, and a genealogical chart. The photograph proved better than expected, and the genealogical chart provided some surprises. I acted on my instincts, and soon found myself in possession of certain facts of a highly explosive nature regarding yourself. I, being good, honest citizen, was highly shocked, and thought I should immediately reveal these facts to the police.

So, sir, I am mailing you this letter. I would appreciate a letter explaining your rather horrendous lapses, and three hundred miniature portraits of Benjamin Franklin (or thirty-thousand miniature portraits of George Washington, if you prefer) if you take my meaning. These portraits should be placed in a sealed manila envelope taped to the bottom of the garbage can placed so neatly before your house.

Sincerely yours,

TEARTEARTEARTEARTEARTEARTEARTEARTEARTEARTEARTEARTEARTEAR

Well, yuh know, when one need's spacefiller, one needs spacefiller.

"The shutters through which I had entered snapped down, and, strapped as I was to the floor, I could see nothing but the dome-like cieling of that infernal saucer.

"Seconds later a steady pressure against my back told me that we had left the Earth and were surging upwards. For five minutes, ten perhaps, I withstood the fearful thrust of acceleration, and then I fainted--blackened out,

I think they call it.

"How long I was unconscious I do not know, but when I awoke, the same steady pressure told my senses that we were still accelerating.

"A feeler brushed my face, and I caught the thought-wave of the ant-man beside me--"We shall land in one minute from now."

"Surely, I thought, something has gone wrong. If we do not slow down now we must all be smashed to pieces. Yet still the pressure continued!

"Increased! Faster and faster it seemed to me that we were going!

"And then it stopped---suddenly!

"The shutters flew up and we were resting gently and naturally on the lunar plain.

"Now, I am no scientist, but I do know that one cannot be travelling tens of thousands of miles an hour one minute, and be sweetly at rest the next. I was not dreaming, of that I am sure; but I am at a loss to understand how it came about."

You think I'm kidding, don't you? How could anyone possibly be so stupid as to not realize what's going on?

Well, apparently people not trained in sf don't. This puzzle was found in "100 Braintwisters" by D. St. P. Barnard.

Ah, well. so what.

Which leaves me with the dilemma of how to fill another page and a half. Tumdedumdum demdum. No, I cannot fill a page and a half by humming. No.

Oh, yes. In the future, I wish to print a goodly number of book reports. The amount of science fictional material in this supposedly sfnal fanzine has never been particularly great, and I'd like to make it a bit greater. I can write a couple of book reports, but I'm already writing three-quarters of the zine. I'd really appreciate it if some of you could write a report or two.

Ah, I see I miscalculated. It's really only a page, since the next page is only a half-page, to leave some room for the address.

My nominee for the 1975 Hugo for Best Dramatic Presentation will, of course be Monty Python and the Holy Grail.

Nick Ulanov, as a staff-member of the Princetonian got tickets to the opening of Monty Python and the Holy Grail. I through somewhat devious manipulations was able to use one of them.

At the opening, each person was handed a folder which contained biography of certain members of the cast. Since I need some space-filler, some of them are herewith printed.

JOHN CLEESE- John Cleese was born in 1939, 242 years after the Treaty of Ryswick, which ended the bitter conflict between France and the Catholic of England and her allies. In the early 1960's, over 650 years after the first Union of the Swiss Cantons, John was delighting audiences of fully paid members at the Footlights Club at England's Cambridge University.

In 1966, a great year for the Methodists---who celebrated the 200th Anniversary of one of their founders, Samuel Wesley---John began writing and appearing in The Frost Report; and in 1968, 543 years after the burning of Jan Hus, he wrote and appeared in AT LAST THE 1948 SHOW. He joined MONTY PYTHON in 1969 and has been doing extremely silly things with a small group of friends for about five years now.

John is married, but, unlike Gustavus Adolphus - the Lion of the North - he has a daughter Cynthia. John's favorite color is money, and his hobby, unlike Cromwell, Dosbojevski, and St. Stephen is avoiding anything unpleasant. He lives in a fashionable part of London which is still being knocked down.

MICHAEL PALIN- Michael Palin, who plays the part of Sir Galahad, and also contributes cameos as the first sentry, the carpenter, Dennis the peasant, the second monk and the Lord of Swamp Castle, is the least interesting of the Monty Python group, and consequently the hardest to write this sort of promotional biography about. While not in any way an unpleasant man, he rather lacks those exciting quirks of character that give the other members of the group their individual charms. Nevertheless, Michael seldom forgets his lines, and is distinguished by his ready and cheerful acceptance of those less rewarding roles that inevitably crop up in an extended comedy series.

He is married to an old girl friend of several of the members of the group. They live, with their various children, in the Welsh quarter in London's Hempstead. Michael is five feet, and eight inches tall, and his eyesight is quite good.

Once when he was on a holiday in Majorca, a small piece of paper adhered to his sandal for several minutes, causing moderate amusement among the onlookers.

GIGO

Greg Costikyan

1675 York Av

NY, NY, 10028

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

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(P.S.- Cover art is by Richard Beck
(I couldn't find any place else to put
the acknowledgement, so---))



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1273 CREST DR
ENCINITAS, CA, 92024

and this, the fourth issue of GIGO, I look out the window from my lordly vantage point from my thirty-first floor apartment, looking out over the city. As I look, it begins to rain. I wonder a bit of all those poor unfortunates who will never know great joy. I turn to my typewriter and ask the Simple folk do?.....